THE GIRL'S REALM ANNUAL

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THE GIRL'S REALM

ANNUAL for 1902.

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WITH UPWARDS OF ONE THOUSAND ILLUSTRATIONS

INCLUDING SEVEN DRAWINGS

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW. By W. L. TAYLOR

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TOM BROWNE
SYBIL REID
AND OTHER EMINENT ARTISTS.

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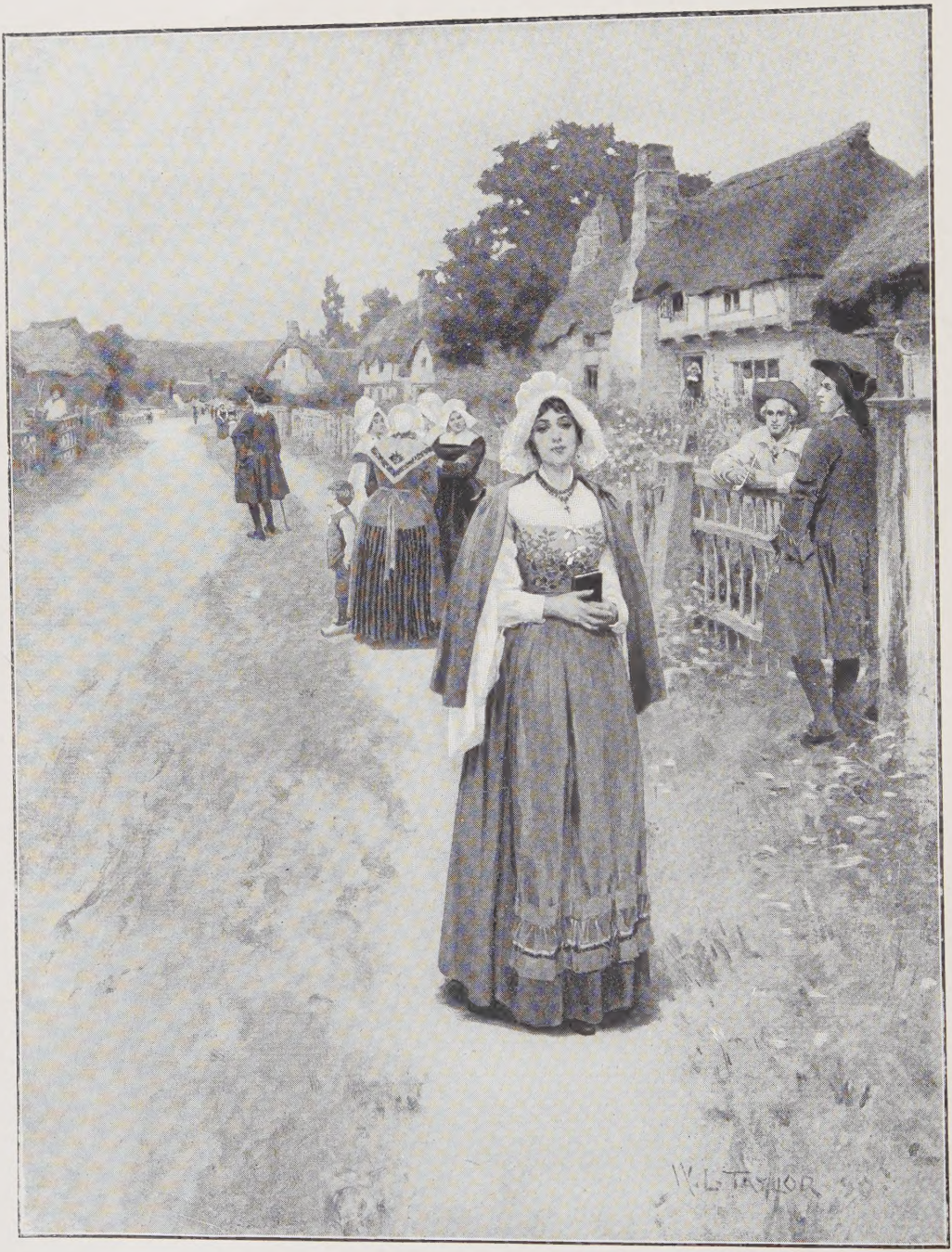
A FIFTH OF NOVEMBER CARNIVAL.



THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR
OF WHICH THIS IS THE FIRST.

EVANGELINE.

"Homeward serenely she walked
with God's benediction upon her."

—*See Editor's note on page 17.*

A Painter of Girlhood.

How Maude Goodman began.

By HENRIETTE CORKRAN.

Mrs. Scanes, better known to fame by her maiden name, Maude Goodman, is the painter of youth and of the grace and charm of home. Young mothers, young girls, children, set amid graceful surroundings, are the subjects of her brush.

The idealisation of home—this is the appeal of her art. Her women, always young, are the Queens of interiors that are models of tasteful arrangement. Her girls are home's brightest ornaments, her children are its idols. Each of her pictures is a poem of home life, a graceful conceit celebrating the power of youth, and the alluring charm of childhood.

I have been told of a soldier who carried with him through the war in South Africa a photograph of one of Maude Goodman's pictures. It was a tender little scene in which a child and a young mother were the central figures. Doubtless the brave fellow saw there home life as he dreamt it. In the stress of war, the roughness of camp life, the separation from those he loved, this picture stirred in him memories touched with passionate longings ; or, perhaps it represented the ideal home he dreamt might be his some day when he returned.

Followers of the realistic school so often take for their theme the criminal, the sordid, the sorrowful side of life only. They forget that as real as its sorrow and shame are its delight and honour. Only the supreme artists can express the greater truth that includes in itself the beauty, the pure joys as well as the terror and tragedy of life. There is another school that makes constant war against the "obvious"

SYBIL: MAUDE GOODMAN'S LITTLE DAUGHTER,

Who has sat for so many of her later pictures.

in art. In its constant preoccupation for the expression only of the subtle and the choice it gets out of harmony with the simple point of view towards life which is that—and let us thank heaven for it—of the great mass of men and women.

Maude Goodman has that secret of success in art and literature which consists in giving effective representation to the ideal of her generation. Great or mediocre the art may be, but the laws of success are the same. The popular artist or writer is he who, whether by apprehending it intellectually, or by being in sympathy with it, gives to his age the most attractive presentment of what it cares for most.

The eighteenth century was a courtly, stately, somewhat artificial age. It had a great admiration for distinction in manner, for a noble bearing. Home and its joys said little to it. Its art gives us little of the intimate life of the time, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Gainsborough were incomparable painters in accord with this view of life. They painted adorable women and girls, touched with the remote stateliness and serenity of goddesses in disguise. If the lovely Lady Crewe sat to Sir Joseph Reynolds as a shepherdess, we think as we look at her of Diana or Venus playing at tending a mortal's flocks, as Apollo played at being herdsman to Admetus. Then there came a reaction; the pendulum of taste swung back from the heights of Olympus to the plains of ordinary life. It was a return to nature, glorified by the genius of Wordsworth and Turner.

Maude Goodman is no seeker after subtle and unwonted effects. The sweet and simple things of everyday life suffice for her inspiration. What children say, what children do and are curious about, delight and interest her, the drama of girlish life charms her: the joy and pride of motherhood she tenderly sympathises with—and these are what she paints. It was her little boy whom she found one day peeping into the works of an old grandfather's clock bent upon seeing "the wheels go wound," that suggested the picture that has so largely helped to make her fame.

It was on a very hot day last summer that I made my way to Kensington to see this painter of youth, and to hear from her lips the story of her own girlhood. As I entered the house I seemed to step into one of her pictures. I was in an atmosphere of cool, delicate, colouring, surrounded by quaint and pretty things. Every detail was an added touch of grace in the homelike and refined effect. The Chippendale furniture, that plays so large a part in her pictures, was here; the Empire mirrors and tables, the white and gold panels, that we are familiar with in the interiors she portrays, were all about me.

I followed my conductor up to the top of the house to the large studio designed by its mistress, an airy, spacious room, with low-toned green walls, cool and light in effect. Half painting room for herself, half billiard room for her husband, the vast apartment, with its parquetted floor strewn with mellow-toned rugs, with its pictures, its artistic properties and knick-knacks, mingling with evidences of intimate family life and recreation, produces a complete impression of combined homeliness and art.

I recognised many of the charming objects that are familiar to those who know her pictures. Here was the lute-harp the fair girl is playing as she sings her pure and passionate "Chant d'Amour," and the sister beside her listens enthralled and stirred with strange emotion, unheeding the child who, too, stands fascinated by that marvellous song: while to it a young man also hearkens with eyes fixed on the rapt face of the singer. Here, too, was the grandfather clock, a hundred-and-fifty years old, whose springs attracted the attention of the small son of the house. The round mirror hangs on the wall in which the fair child, gazing at her own reflection, became a baby Narcissus enamoured of her beauty, and confiding to it, "I love 'oo."

My hostess came forward to greet me, a slender, graceful woman, dressed all in white. There is the charm about Maude Goodman of an exquisite womanliness. Her manners are gentle and reserved, her voice low and sweet. By her side walked a small maiden dressed in a picturesque olive green velvet frock, carrying a white kitten in her arms.

"My little daughter, Sybil," said Maude Goodman.

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"WANT TO SEE THE WHEELS GO ROUND"

This picture made Maude Goodman famous

By permission o Messrs. S. H. Hildesheimer London and Manchester.

"ALL IN A GARDEN FAIR."

From the picture by Maude Goodman.

By permission of Messrs. Legatt, Cheapside.

UN CHANT D'AMOUR.

This is one of Maude Goodman's most popular pictures.

I did not need the introduction, the chubby serious child-face, with its grave gray eyes, with its surrounding mass of curly, light brown hair, had looked out at me so often of late from her mother's pictures.

"What are you going to be?" I asked Sybil, when I had become better acquainted with her.

"An artist, like Mother," she replied gravely. "I can paint in water colours, but I am too busy to paint much now, for I sit for mother's pictures."

The story of her girlhood, as my hostess told it, was very simple and suggestive. It was of a youth all informed with dreams of art, and spent in constant and purposeful endeavour to realise those visions into tangible form and colour.

Maude Goodman was born in Manchester, and was a delicate child. She lost her mother very early, "but I had," she said, "the kindest of stepmothers." From the first the child wanted to draw and paint. "I was always scribbling faces and drawing trees on every scrap of paper I found in the house. One of my clearest recollections is my great delight in the possession of my first paint box. It cost me a penny. From that moment I spent most of my time brush in hand.

"As I grew up the wish to become a landscape painter was strong in me. Turner's pictures were my ideal pictures. I longed to see nature as he saw it."

But she was too delicate, she said, for constant study out of doors. She caught cold easily, and her hope to be a landscape painter had to be abandoned.

It is interesting to speculate if this painter of home life had been able to carry out her desire and had been able to devote herself to painting nature, would she have caught something of the glamour that lies over Turner's seas and skies?

"I never remember the time," said my hostess when brilliancy of colour did not appeal to me very strongly. "Perhaps it is because of this that Rossetti and Burne-Jones say so much to me."

The formative influence of these two poet painters is very strongly marked in her work. They were the highest expression of the spirit animating the æsthetic movement that spread over England not so many years ago. We need scarcely be middle-aged to remember how æstheticism influenced not only our literature and painting, but transformed the decoration of our homes, and almost threatened to destroy the rule over feminine taste in costume, of the fashion plate and the dressmaker. Æstheticism had its extravagances. It has been ridiculed on the stage, in novels and in "Punch," yet its influence has been salutary. It helped to destroy, let us hope for ever, the depressing ugliness and conventional formality of the English middle-class homes in the early Victorian age. The sense of the necessity of beauty and character in our daily surroundings that it set itself to awaken has remained with us.

Maude Goodman's pictures are the produce of the more restrained taste of the æsthetic school. Before its advent her work as it now stands could not have existed. It would not have been true to life. The pretty interiors that she paints, the picturesquely frocked women, girls and children who inhabit them, would not have been those of the upper English middle classes of to-day.

The story of Maude Goodman's beginning in art is the story of the struggle for expression of a talent that could not be checked.

"My father—one of the best and kindest of fathers—shared the prejudice many men of that day had, against their girls adopting art as a profession. I had great difficulty in obtaining his permission to get lessons in drawing. But when he saw me always pencil and brush in hand he realised how much in earnest I was, he relented so far as to allow me to study under a master. It is, however, to my stepmother that I owe a debt of gratitude I can never repay. She sympathised with me, she encouraged me in every way. It was she who at last persuaded my father to allow me to do what I longed to do, come up to London, enter the School of Art at South Kensington, and study seriously."

It was difficult to draw from Mrs. Scanes the story of her girlish success. Sir Edward Poynter, then Mr. Poynter, was the Art Director of the South Kensington Schools, and she spoke with gratitude of the unfailing kindness and interest that he showed her. The young student from Manchester carried off prizes and medals. It was hard work to attend the various classes, to prepare for the various examinations. She was always delicate, but she never relaxed her zeal, and passed every test triumphantly. Her heart was set upon winning a studentship at the Royal Academy Schools, but her father's will was set in firm opposition to this scheme. He strongly objected to young men and girls working together from the living model. Then she longed to go to Paris and to study under one of the great artists who, as is the custom there, take in pupils. But again she met with opposition. Still the longing to consecrate her life to her art and to become a great painter grew and strengthened. At last her desire was granted. She met a teacher who was to draw out and mould her artistic individuality.

A Spanish painter, a pupil of Fortuny, had come to London and opened a studio. Some of my girl readers may have visited the magnificent collection of Spanish pictures, both ancient and modern, lately exhibited at the Guildhall. Conspicuous among the modern work was that of Fortuny, a marvel of verve, of colour, of light and shade. The pupil had mastered the method of his master, and he understood how to convey this knowledge and how to cultivate the originality of the students who placed themselves under his direction. Maude Goodman, on leaving the South Kensington Schools, entered the Spanish painter's studio. "I made great progress, and can never begin to tell you all I learnt from him," she said.

She was very young when she sent a picture, "A Girl going to her First Ball," to the French Art Gallery in Pall Mall, then under the management of Mr. Tom Wallis. The picture was speedily sold for fifteen guineas. Mr. Wallis, who recognised its merit and promise, told the purchaser that he thought the young

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CAPTIVES.

From the picture by Maude Goodman.

painter ought to have "twenty guineas." A few days later a cheque for the additional five guineas reached Mr. Wallis, with a letter from the owner of "A Girl going to her First Ball." The picture had been so much admired that its possessor felt it was only due to Maude Goodman to receive the full sum the art director of the gallery had put upon it. "I was encouraged and delighted when I read that letter," said my hostess, "it was not because of the extra money it enclosed, but because it gave me the assurance that my picture had pleased and appealed to another."

The following year Maude Goodman married. After she was a wife and a mother, her art matured and grew richer in quality. The painter of the romance of the home and the nursery may be said to have "arrived" when she exhibited, two years after her marriage, the picture, "You Darling!" representing a young mother bending over the cradle of her first-born. It was a poem of the rapture of maternity. After it came that series of idylls of the home with which her name is associated.

The picture, the prints of which have had the largest sale up to the present is, "Want to see the wheels go wound." It was painted when her son, now a youth in his teens, was about four years old. The same child appears in one of her most charming works, "And then the Fairies went to bed." A mother, in the prettiest of Empire costumes, has been telling fairy tales to her little one, she closes the book with the announcement that it is time for good children to go to bed for the fairies have retired to rest for the night. "Un Chant d'Amour" is another of her most admired pictures. The Princess Louise, Duchess of Argyll, chose it for one of a series of tableaux vivants which she arranged, and in which she, and other members of the royal family, appeared before the late Queen.

I asked Mrs. Scanes to tell me something about her method of work. "Did she make studies for a picture before beginning it?"

Studies did not help her much, she replied. When an inspiration comes to her she sets to work straight away, always using models, always painting from the life.

"Do you advise girls to take up art as a career?" I asked.

"Yes, if they are prepared to study really hard," she replied, earnestly. "They must be prepared for days of heart-break. Dreadful days when nothing will come right. Oh! how often have I had fits of despair at the impossibility of realising what I wanted to do. Girls, however," she continued, "are much better in health and spirits if they have a serious occupation. There is no finer career than that of the painter if the one who takes it up has enthusiasm and power of work. One great advantage the woman artist enjoys—her work does not take her away from home."

This is the thoughtful advice of a woman who, by strenuous work, has achieved a great popularity, and who never has lost the femininity of her nature.

The ideal Maude Goodman represents is the ideal of the English of a certain class—the upper middle if I must give it a name. The success with which she does this is one of the strengths of her appeal. Some of us are living in homes such as those she paints, alas, only too few! But all of us, in so far as our lives are governed by a sense of elegance of manner and refined comfort, would like to live in them. Maude Goodman is a chronicler to some, for others she points the way.

VIOLA'S CONSPIRACY

By
Mrs. De Horne Vaizey
Author of
"Rhoda," "Viola's Revenge," etc.

Illustrated by
HILDA COWHAM.

"THE CROCODILE WENDED ITS WAY ALONG THE PARADE."

CHAPTER I.

"SIXPENCE each, please!" said the head girl, jingling her pocket with the left hand, and holding out the right with an imperious gesture. "Hurry up! I've two more class rooms to do before dinner, so there's no time for conundrums. If anyone wants to give more she may, but sixpence is the lowest. You can't get off below that!"

One or two of the girls began fumbling meekly for purses, but Viola North widened her eyes, and raised indignant protest.

"What—again! What on earth for, I should like to know? Fräulein can't have two birthdays in one week, and Miss Young's was last month. The term is not half over, and I am reduced to beggary with all these birthdays! It's pretty rough on me, for mine comes in the holidays, so I get no chance. Who has the impertinence to be born this week?"

"No one at all. It's for fireworks, goosey! The fifth is next Tuesday, and we always collect for a show. You are giving for your own amusement this time, so you needn't be stingy. You will have some fun for your money."

Viola made a grimace, more expressive than beautiful.

"Fun, indeed! Poking out of the schoolroom window, while the teachers set off a few miserable rockets, and catherine wheels! I don't see much amusement in *that!* When I was at home we had something like fireworks. We set them off ourselves, the boys and I, with no one to interfere, and go into fits in case we caught cold, or blew ourselves up. That's part of the sport. A squib went off in my face and singed my hair. Didn't I jump! The boys said they couldn't tell which was which for a few minutes, —the squib or I, and another time Ronald had his pocket jammed with rockets, and they went off, and burned a great hole in his coat. That was something like fun!"

"Jolly good thing Miss Young keeps you indoors if that's the way you behave! Are you going to give me your sixpence, or are you not? I can't wait here all day!" said the head girl severely, and Viola fumbled for her pocket, and turned over the coins in her purse with a sigh of funereal despondency.

"Bang went saxpence! If I must, I must, but I'll have some fun for my money—you mark my words! If you think I am going to sit still and look at a peep-show out of a window, you

are mistaken, that's all. I shall put my fertile brains to work, and provide a little excitement on my own account."

"It would be a good thing if you *did* set them to work! They are mostly occupied in mischief-making so far as I can see," said the head girl, who, as head girl, felt herself bound to improve the occasion, but in the depths of her heart, she agreed that the coming celebration lacked the element of excitement, and indulged in a naughty little wish that the threat might be fulfilled.

Next day Viola was unusually quiet as the crocodile wended its way along the parade. Her companion glanced ever and anon at the lovely, serious little face, and wondered what beautiful and poetic thoughts were causing that rapt expression. Being of a sentimental nature, she asked no questions, but amused herself by imagining a dozen different explanations, each one more romantic and high flown than the last. The silence lasted until the Norfolk Hotel was reached, when Viola suddenly burst into a laugh, and clapped her hands in triumph.

"Ma foi!' she cried, "je l'ai!" for French conversation was the order of the day, and even in her excitement she was careful to keep to the rule. "Depuis hier, j'ai racké mon brains à penser de quelque chose que je peu faire en le jour de drol Reynard. Maintenant j'ai une idée que vous ferrez mourir avec rirant."

"Vraiment!" ejaculated Evelyn, elated, but mystified all the same. "Comme c'est bonne; mais je n'ai pas tout compris. 'Le jour du drol Reynard!' Qu'est que sais que cela veux dire?"

Guy Fawkes, ma chère! Je trouve c'est un tres bonne translation. . . . Ce soir quand nous allons nous couchons, je vous disai mon idée, si vous voulez me promis jamais dit un mot à quelq'un!"

"Wee, wee! Parfaitment. Honest Injun. Jamais un mot!" agreed Evèlyn excitedly, and this was the first stage in the development of the plot.

That night, after the lights had been extinguished, a white figure crept into Viola's bed, and a conversation was carried on, in tones so subdued as to leave undisturbed the other occupants of the dormitory.

"S-s-ilence!" hissed Viola dramatically. "Don't scream! Don't faint! Do you know who this is poking this finger into your ribs? It's not me—it's Another! It's Guy Fawkes, number two! I have made up a most lovely plot to raze this Seminary to the ground, and you are to discover it, and defeat my nefarious schemes! I have planned it all out, and it fits in beautifully. In the cupboard next to the boot room, there is an old apple barrel which is used for fire-wood. It is quite light; I tried it to-day, and I can roll it into the boot room in two minutes. That will be the gunpowder barrel, and all the way along the passage and up the stairs I'll lay a neat little train to carry the spark to the fatal spot. See?"

"Y—es. Only how—It will take a great deal of gunpowder, won't it? How are you going to get it?" queried Evelyn, the literal, whereupon Viola gave her a derisive kick, and said mockingly:

"You owl! I shan't get any at all. I have no wish to murder my fellow critturs, if you have. Tooth powder is good enough for me, and I'm going to sacrifice a whole new box for the occasion. Very well! Miss Young and Fräulein will be in the garden letting off fireworks; Maddie and Miss North will be mounting guard in the schoolroom, and all the lights will be turned down. I will slip out of the room, and attire myself in a black mask, and that long dark cloak of Ursula's with the peaked hood. I flatter myself that I shall look fairly gruesome when I take up my position in the boot room to make final preparations. At this critical moment you must go to the big girls in the dining-room all chattering with fright—it's quite easy, you only crunch your teeth, and stand on the side of your feet to get off your balance, and then you shake like a jelly. Tell them you have something *Dreadful* to unfold, and ask them to come into the Hall to hear it. That will make them nervous to start with, and they will be more easily taken in. When you get them together, lead them to the top of the cellar stairs and show them the train. Wave your hands about, and don't stop to think what you are saying, for the more mixed-up you get, the more genuine it will sound. What you have to impress upon them is that you have followed the train, and find it leads to the cellar; that you have heard someone moving about down there, and feel con-

"MEG SUDDENLY CAUGHT SIGHT OF SOMETHING WHICH MADE HER GATHER TOGETHER HER SKIRTS AND STEP GINGERLY DOWN THE FIRST THREE STEPS."—(*p.* 15).

vinced that a conspiracy is afoot to destroy the school, and send the youthful inmates to a kee—ruel death! Roll your r's! It sounds ever so much more blood-curdling that way. Throw your arms round their necks and beg them to fly with you to catch the assassin at his toils, and save the lives of your loved ones. If they refuse, call them cowards, and stalk down yourself, and they will feel such sneaks that they will be obliged to follow. When you get to the boot room, I'll be bending over the barrel—an awful figure dimly seen in the light of a candle held in an outstretched hand."

"But—but—that's not right! It wouldn't be safe. If you pretend it is gunpowder, you oughtn't to have a light. It would go off! You'd be killed yourself! You ought to put a match to the end of the train, and fly for your life. You mustn't have a candle, it's not right!"

Viola kicked again, with both feet this time, and emphasised her impatience by a pinch into the bargain.

"You are *too* maddening—you really are! How could they see me without a light? What's the good of anything if they don't see me? What does it matter if it *is* wrong—it's only tooth-powder, and besides, they will have no time to think; they will be too much frightened for that. I do think it's too bad, when I take all this trouble to make a little excitement, that you should do nothing but make objections! I've a good mind to ask Norah to be my confederate! She has some spirit in her—Norah has!

This awful threat reduced Evelyn to a condition of abject submission. The idea of Norah being chosen before herself, caused such an agony of perturbation as only can be imagined

by those who understand the intensity of schoolgirl friendship. She gasped with horror, and wound her arms caressingly round the wriggling figure.

"Dar—ling! Don't be cross. I think it's a heavenly idea—truly I do! It will be ripping sport. I'll do everything you tell me, and practise chattering every night when I go to bed. I truly never meant to make objections, I was only asking questions."

"Well don't ask any more then! It does madden me to have other people interfering with my jokes! I'm going to blow you up my own way, or I shan't do it at all, and if it's a failure it will be your fault, not mine. You had better go back to your own bed, I think, for you have pulled off all the blankets already, and you will have me on the floor in another minute if you go on whirling about like a tee-to-tum!"

This was grossly unfair, for it had been she herself who kicked, and poked, and clutched the bed clothes in violence of denunciation, but Evelyn knew her place better than to say so, and withdrew to her own quarters with becoming obedience. She knew that Viola's attacks of temper were of short duration, and that in the morning she would be once more wreathed in smiles, so what was the good of worrying? She drew the clothes round her neck, rolled herself into a tight little ball, and fell promptly and soundly asleep.

CHAPTER II.

A WEEK later the display of fireworks took place in the garden at the back of Lea Brook School, and up to a certain point, everything went off exactly as Viola had prophesied. The principals occupied themselves setting off the various "pieces," the two junior teachers kept in bounds the ecstacies of the little ones, and at the dining-room window sat the dress circle, in the shape of fifth form girls, critical, patronising, superior.

"How much longer is this deadly dulness going on? I feel as if I had been here a fortnight already. Silly, spluttering things! If I couldn't have better fireworks than those, I wouldn't have them at all. It's pretty boring for me, for I know what they ought to be. We can see the Crystal Palace shows from our windows, just as well as if we had paid to go in," said Hilda, with an air. She delighted in queening it over her companions, and in boasting of her own superior advantages; in return, it was their object in life to snub her, and cap her stories by others fifty times as grand.

"Really!" exclaimed Mabel innocently. "How nice! It must be quite cheerful for you living so near. Especially on the days when there are excursions! I've never seen the Palace Fireworks, only the ones at the Paris Exhibition this summer, but even they were pretty good! Now look—I implore you, *look* at Fräulein! What *is* she trying to do? She has been muddling over that stick for the last half hour!"

"Wake me up when the next act begins! This continued excitement is too much for my nerves. I'm going to sleep!" yawned Kitty, dropping her head on the shoulder of a companion, who hitched her away with unsympathetic promptness.

"Don't squash me flat, please! Remember your weight. My parents are abroad, and would be annoyed if they had to come home and attend my funeral. . . . Oh Jemima! call that a rocket. I'd make a better one myself out of a candle and a box of matches. This is too slow for words. What do you suppose would happen if we adjourned to the playroom?"

Ernestine coughed dryly, in clever imitation of Miss Young's manner when particularly annoyed.

"'*Sorry*, my dears, to find you do not appreciate our efforts for your amusement! *Grieved*, to think we have inflicted such boredom upon you! *Next* year we must endeavour to find a more profitable manner of spending the time!' . . . That means lessons, of course, but I'm sure I don't mind. I couldn't be more bored than I am now!"

Plainly now or never was the time for Evelyn to unfold her story, and out she came from her hiding-place behind the door, chattering without any need of pretence, so anxious was she to play her part with success, and win the approval of her chief. The girls were only too willing to follow, but when the stairs were reached, unanimously refused to be alarmed at the sight of the "train."

"Bah! Is that all? It's only dust, you silly,

or cinder ash spilt out of a pail. I see nothing extraordinary in that!"

"What a fuss about nothing!" sniffed Meg scornfully, then suddenly caught sight of something which made her gather together her skirts, and step gingerly down the first three steps.

"It *is* funny, though! It goes all the way down, and there are little squills of paper put up the steps to connect the powder. It has been done on purpose—that's certain. Now, Evelyn, no jokes! You did this yourself!"

"I didn't! I didn't! I tell you honestly I never did!" cried Evelyn earnestly. "But I heard something moving. Listen carefully, and you will hear it yourselves!"

She raised her voice as she spoke, and the confederate in the cellar promptly gave the barrel a push towards the wall, and drew a deep, sonorous breath.

"It's the cat! cried Hilda, bravely, but the other girls looked scared, and huddled together in the background. If it were a cat, it was certainly a very lively specimen, for the noise, instead of decreasing, grew steadily louder, and louder. For a moment Evelyn felt impatiently that Viola was overacting her part, but at the next, her impatience changed to panic, as a shrill cry of alarm was echoed by another in a deep bass voice, followed by a sound of scuffling, of muffled shrieks, and finally by the charge of a man's dark figure up the cellar stairs.

The girls shrieked in concert; Hilda flew like an arrow into the garden, to summon Miss Young, Meg tragically barred the doorway with her arms, and her companions pressed round her in a solid phalanx of defence.

"Don't let him pass! Hold him till she comes! Hold fast! Hold fast!" shrieked the shrill treble voices; Maddie and Miss North came rushing out of the schoolroom; the little ones took up a prolonged wail of terror, through which could vaguely be heard the protests of the thief, and muffled cries and groans from below.

"What is this? What is this? What does it all mean?" cried Miss Young, rushing in by the side door, "Anyone hurt? Stand back everyone and let me see what is wrong. Who is that man on the cellar stairs?"

"A thief, a thief! He was trying to escape. Don't let him pass! Guard the door. Oh my arms!" cried Meg, sinking back in a fainting

"THE LITTLE ONES TOOK UP A PROLONGED WAIL OF TERROR."

condition, and thus released the "thief" fell forward into the hall, stumbled helplessly for a few yards, and righted himself just in time to avoid falling into the arms of the principal herself.

"Stand!" she cried dramatically, then her expression changed suddenly to one of blank amazement which was reflected on the faces by which she was surrounded, for this was no desperado after all, but only Jo—poor, honest, not-too-brilliant Jo—the boot man, who came regularly every day to clean the young ladies' shoes. Evening was not his regular hour, but as he pantingly explained, he had come in on his way home, hoping to see "a bit of the fun," and had fallen asleep over his work. He had been aroused by the flicker of a light, to see a masked figure standing over a barrel, and after that he could scarcely tell what had happened. The light had gone out, he had felt the Unknown close upon him, had struggled towards the doorway, and escaped as by a miracle to bear the news to his employer!

"ALAS FOR GUY FAWKES! NOTHING WAS VISIBLE OF HIM SAVE A PAIR OF SLIM AND SHAPELY BLACK LEGS KICKING WILDLY IN THE AIR." (*p.* 17.)

"A masked man! A barrel! What nonsense is this?" cried Miss Young impatiently. "You have been dreaming, Joseph, and I am exceedingly annoyed with you for making all this fuss and upset. You have quite frightened the young ladies!"

"But Miss Young there *is* somebody down there! Just listen, and you will hear him groaning. You couldn't hear before because we were all making such a noise. And there was a train of powder all down the stairs, as if it were leading to something in the cellar. Jo has disturbed it running up, but you can see the remains still. Just look!"

Miss Young bent forward obediently, but not the slightest sign of alarm shewed itself on her face. Fortunately for herself she was gifted with a very acute sense of humour, and the idea of masked men and powder trains, in connection with a young ladies' seminary, was a severe trial to her composure. She was annoyed all the same, however, and her voice was sufficiently severe as she said, "I will go down myself and see what is wrong, and will you come too, Fräulein, and bring a candle with you. There is certainly someone in the cellar, but to judge by the sounds he is making I don't fancy his resistance will be very formidable!"

Oh Viola! Unhappy Viola! Evelyn, sitting shaking on a chair in the hall, could only weep and wring her hands in her inability to help her chief. She would not speak in the faint hope that even now Viola's ingenuity might find a way of escape, but if, indeed, she were captured, she would immediately come forward

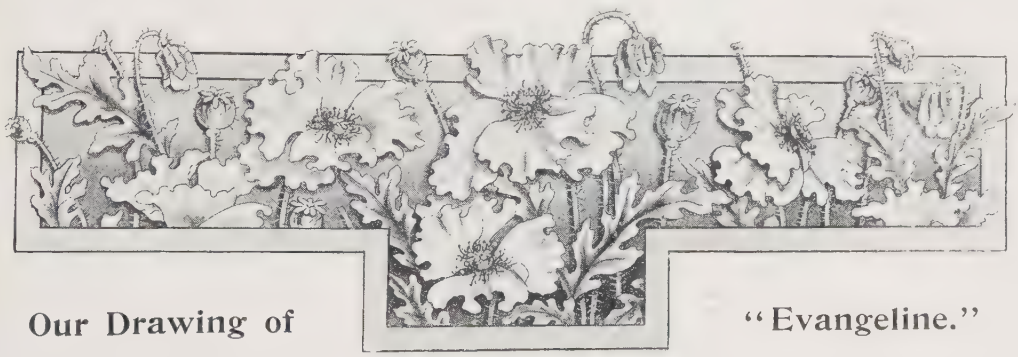
and own her own share in the plot. Thud—thud—thud—went the steps of the rescuing trio on the stairs; squeal—squeal—squeal—came the sounds from the cellar. Her agitation grew too great to be endured: in the general commotion she edged nearer and nearer to the cellar stairs, slipt down—and peered—and saw!

The boot room was empty save for the barrel pushed against the wall; a curious, animated barrel, which emitted groans, and grunts, and cries of distress, and swayed to and fro in response to some movement within. No glimpse of the assassin was to be seen; no cowl, or inky mask, no hand outstretched to ply the fatal match. Alas for Guy Fawkes! of all his weird and terrible personality, nothing was visible to the eyes of the beholders, save a pair of slim and shapely black legs, kicking wildly in the air!

The would-be assassin was lifted bodily to the ground, shaken free from dust and dirt, and put to bed with a bandage round her head, and sticking plaster on her nose. Next day she had an imposition ten pages long, a lecture even more protracted, five scratches, a black eye, and a deep cut on the nose, yet—strange inconsistency of school-girl nature! she felt no glimmering of regret.

"I never, no never, expected it to be such a success! What luck for me that Jo should choose that night, of all others, to come and clean boots!" she cried rhapsodically to her companions. "My dears, it was as good as a play when he came crawling out of his corner! He thought *I* was a thief, and I thought *he* was a thief, and off we both flew for the cellar stairs. The candle went out somehow—I suppose I dropped it—and I ran bang against the barrel and tilted forward. Just at that moment he knocked against me, and over I went still more, put down my hands to save myself, and dived straight down to the bottom, among all the cinders, and chips! Miss Young's face when she fished me out, was too killing for words! It was all she could do not to laugh, but she was furious all the same, and in such a state about the cut on my nose. She thinks it may leave a mark."

Viola put up her hand, and caressed the sticking plaster fondly. "Wouldn't it be ripping if it did!" she cried eagerly. "I'd have it for a souvenir!"



Our Drawing of "Evangeline."

I HAVE chosen the drawing of Evangeline going down the long street of her native village of Grand Pré on Sunday morning as the first of that beautiful Series of Longfellow drawings by W. L. Taylor, the publication of which in THE GIRL'S REALM is to be one of the features of the new Volume.

The story of the "Maid of Acadie" is the story of a love hopeful, enduring, patient. It is familiar to all girls, and I need not tell it here again. We know how, on the day that was to have been Evangeline's wedding day, she is torn from her betrothed, Gabriel, the blacksmith's son. The British have set the homesteads of Grand Pré on fire, and are forcibly exiling the simple inhabitants to colonies far distant from their beloved land, to punish them for having, it is suspected, helped the French in the war raging between the two nations in Canada. In the confusion of that terrible moment Evangeline and Gabriel are parted, and from that time her life is spent in one long and fruitless quest for her lover. In Longfellow's beautiful poem we follow her wanderings and watch her nature growing ever more saintlike in the fiery ordeal of the anguish of hope deferred. Her love is never chilled, and her faith in Gabriel is never shaken. We see her in the ethereal beauty of her happy youth, when, as in our illustration, she goes down the long village street—

"With her chaplet of beads and her missal,
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of blue, and the ear-ring,
Brought in the olden times from France."

We follow her during weary years until age creeps upon her. Having lost all hope of meeting Gabriel on earth, she consecrates her life to the care of the weak and the suffering. For years she is a Sister of Mercy. One day she is called to the bedside of a man approaching his last hour. In the dying man she recognises Gabriel.

THE NEXT PICTURE.

The next picture in this Series, entitled "The Shipbuilder's Daughter," will be published in the Christmas number. It will be printed on plate paper, and so bound that it can be detached for the purpose of framing.

B

Miss Alcott's Letters to her "Laurie"

A Series of Letters written by Louisa May Alcott to Alfred Whitman, whom she acknowledges in the last of the letters to be printed, as the original of "Laurie" in her famous story of "Little Women."

EDITED BY "LAURIE" HIMSELF.

MISS ALCOTT'S OWN CHARACTERISATION OF THE EDITOR OF THE PRESENT LETTERS.

"BUT my especial boy of the batch was A——, proud and cold and shy to other people, sad and serious sometimes when his good heart and tender conscience showed him his shortcomings, but so grateful for sympathy and a kind word.

MISS ALCOTT.

"I could not get at him as easily as I could the other lads, but thanks to Dickens, I found him out at last! We played Dolphus and Sophia Tetterby in the 'Haunted Man' at one of the school festivals; and during the rehearsals I discovered that my Dolphus was—permit the expression, oh, well-bred readers!—a trump. What fun we had, to be sure, acting the droll and pathetic scenes together with a swarm of little Tetterbys skirmishing about us! From that time he has been my Dolphus, and I his Sophy, and my yellow-haired laddie don't forget me, though he has a younger Sophy now, and some small Tetterbys of his own. He writes just the same affectionate letters as he used to do, though I, less faithful, am too busy to answer them."—*Aunt Jo's Scrap-Bag. Volume 1; pages 15 and 16.*

A FOREWORD.

In the fall of 1857, I, a motherless boy of fifteen, landed in Concord, Massachusetts (a place I knew nothing of except its Revolutionary fame), and was enrolled as a student in the school taught by Mr. Frank B. Sanborn. I became a member of the family of Mr. Minot Pratt. With John, the second son, who had just returned from the West, and with Carrie, his only sister, I formed at once an intimate and lasting friendship, and together John and I paid our first visit to the Alcott family, that had come back to Concord after its various wanderings and experiences. The Alcotts occupied half of a house near the Town Hall, where they remained until after the death of Elizabeth, when they removed for a short time into the Hawthorne Cottage, and from there into their new home, Orchard House, or "Apple Slump" as it was christened by Louisa.

In the little house near the Town Hall began the acquaintance which was to bring to John Pratt a loving and devoted wife, and to the writer the joy of a lifelong friendship with the Alcotts and the Pratts. So close was this friendship, and so hearty and genuine the way in which I was taken into companionship by these gifted people, that it never occurred to me that all, with the exception of Abby, were at least ten years older than myself, and although I was born and had lived all my days in Massachusetts, the last year of my life in that State seems to have included almost all that has been permanent in my memory of it, and Concord the only place that I think of as home. It is hard for me now to realize that I lived in Concord not quite one year.

It was but a few weeks after school opened when the question of having plays was talked of, and The Concord Dramatic Union was organized, with Mr. Sanborn, the three Alcott girls, George B. Bartlett, and his brothers Ripley and Ned, Edward and Edith Emerson, Alex. Clarke and others, as members.

The vestry of the Unitarian Church was used by Mr. Sanborn as a classroom, and here we erected a portable stage and gave a series of plays, and dramatized scenes from Dickens that were of a high order of merit, the company being composed of excellent actors. Abby Alcott, the younger sister, at this time was musical director, but later she became the leading lady of the company.

The scenes from Dickens dramatised by

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Louisa were among the best of the productions. Louisa and Anna Alcott as Sairy Gamp and Betsey Prig were inimitable, and Louisa was greatly given to quoting the language of these two worthies, as will be seen from the letters here given. Louisa's original monologue, "Oronthy Bluggage," was not given in public, but was given occasionally at home, to the intense enjoyment of the fortunate few who were permitted to hear her.

Louisa Alcott's "Mrs. Jarley" Address.

Louisa's introduction of "Mrs. Jarley's Wax Figures" was extremely good. This is what she recited:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN—I have the honour to present to you the finest collection of wax Stattooary in the known world. The selection of figgers is elegant and instructive, classical and calm. They are fitted to instil moral lessons into the mind of infancy, to warm the burning heart of youth, to cheer the eye of totterin' age. In the words of our great national poet, Geo. Washington, "Waxworks is friend of man, it refines the fancy, enlarges the sphere of reason, cultivates the soul, therefore cherish it."

My first figger is the unfortinate maid of honor in the time of Queen Elizabeth, who died from pricking her finger in consequence of working on the Sabbath day. You will observe the blood a-tricklin' from her finger, also the gold-eyed needle of the period.

This is Jasper Packlemerton, of atrocious memory, who destroyed 11 wives by tickling the soles of their feet when they were sleeping in the consciousness of innocence and virtoo. On being brought to the gallows and asked if he wasn't sorry, he said, "Yes, sorry that I let 'em off so easy," and hoped that all Christian husbands would forgive him because of it. This should be a warning to all young ladies to be particular as to the little domestic habits of the gentlemen of their choice because they may be rather inconvenient sometimes. Observe that his fingers is curled as if in the act of ticklin', and his eye is represented as winkin' exactly as he appeared at the moment of his arrest.

This is the famous Welch dwarf, Morgan-ap-Kerigvich-ian-vor-erin-go-brach, in the 99th year of her age. Her height was two feet ten, of a mild disposition, bland, passionate and serene, and died at 110 from partaking too copiously of clam-mack-ne-a-mau, the national dish of her land.

Next is Capt. Kydd, the great nautical highwayman, who scuttled 94 ships, murdered 13 innocent babes, 25 lovely women, and men untold during his sanguinary career which was brought to a providential terminus in a conflict with the Patagonians. He is here in the act of spilling the noble blood of Lady Boadicea Fitzbattleaxe, an heroic miss who fell a victim to filial love because she refused with Spartanian firmness to disclose the retreat of her venerable Pa, Lord Coriolanus Herculaneum.

This is a striking likeness of Martha Bang, the insane maid who poisoned 14 families with pickled walnuts. The fumes of boiling vinegar mounted to her brain during the manefacter of the pickles, till she became a maniac and spread devastation around her till she was discovered, when she recovered her reason and died calmly penitent in fierce convulsions.

I hardly need tell you that this is a speaking image of that colossal bard, Lord Beron, as he appeared while composing the ninth chapter of his great novel, Childe Harold. It has been pronounced more like than the original, and Lady Beron was borne out in strong hysterics when she beheld this image of a man whose moral, religious, and social virtues render him a worthy object of a nation's adoration.

This, my last and greatest work, is the well-known instructor of youth of Chinese Persuasion, Ching-Chang-ho-ang-po-po-catle-pattle, who was nine feet eleven inches in height, the brother-in-law of Confucius and the most soaring intellect of his age. He rendered himself famous by the introduction of the Arts and Sciences into Pekin, where he established a Sigh-book-sob or seminary, and a High-fun-see or theatre for the representation of Chinese life.

This great man died in his 335th year, and was interred with Oriental splendor in a pagoda which was considered a triumph of Eastern architecture, and upon which was this inscription, "Hi-man-see-sky," which, translated, means, "He had not far to go," a delicate allusion to his height and consequent nearness to heaven.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am in the habit of adding to this already astonishing exhibition an unheard of

ALFRED WHITMAN, THE LAD WHOM LOUISA ALCOTT 'MOTHERED.' SHE ACKNOWLEDGED HIM TO BE THE ORIGINAL OF "LAURIE."

feature by winding up the figgers when they each complete this triumph of art by making *graceful* and *life-like* gestures appropriate to their characters.

Her Majesty on beholding this was moved to cry aloud with uplifted hands and tears of rapter trembling in her august eye, "Almighty Science! to what perfection hast thou been brought!"

In November, 1858, I left New England for my new home in Kansas. I did not know then, and did not for many years realize fully, what an extremely fortunate boy I was in having gained the goodwill and affection of such loving friends as those in Concord. Letters from the various members of the Alcott family came to me. Of these letters, those from Louisa were the most inspiring, and it is because I feel that they illustrate a phase of her character that has not been shown to the public as it should have been, that I have consented to their publication.

Mrs. Cheney, in her introduction to "The Life, Letters and Journal of Miss Alcott," says: "She was not a voluminous correspondent; she did not encourage many intimacies, and she seldom wrote letters except to her family, unless in reference to some purpose she had strongly at heart. Writing was her constant occupation, and she was not tempted to indulge in it as a recreation. Her letters are brief and strictly to the point, but always characteristic in feeling and expression."

Deference to the wishes of the surviving members of the Pratt family compels me to omit several of the letters and parts of others. Enough remains, however, in the letters which follow to prove to all lovers of Louisa M. Alcott that justice has never been done to the sweetest and most attractive side of her nature—her real love for boys, which sprang from the boy nature that was hers in so marked a degree; and how our hearts go out to her as she makes her earnest appeals for a proper recognition of this quality. She always said she ought to have been a boy, and that she could not be was one of the many crosses she had to bear.

ALFRED WHITMAN.

TO ADOLPHUS TETTERBY

AN ACROSTIC OR AN ENIGMA.

A clever, pleasant, flaxen youth,
L ight-hearted, jocular and gay,
F ull of good nature and blunt truth,
R eady for fun by night or day.
E ager to please those worth the pleasing,
D ecidedly a friend to teasing.

W ilful at times, but gentle generally,
H onest and open, sensible and nice,
I ndolent at school, at play a busy bee,
T he friend of that great institution, *ice*.
M adly in love with painting, his chief joy,
A glorious, soaring, *Kansas*, human boy;
N ow in guessing this your time employ.

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.

THE LETTERS.

The first of the letters came to me just before I started for Kansas, after an absence of a month or two from Concord. A favorite word with Louisa was the word "much," used instead of pet; being "muched" meant being "petted." Those who have learned to know and love her through her books can imagine what being "muched" by such a woman meant to a motherless boy, who for the first time in his life realized the blessed feeling of being understood and appreciated.

"Don't think I'm Demented if I 'Much' You."

BOSTON, October 27, 1858.

MY DEAREST DOLPHUS,—I've been hoping to get a minute's peace to write to my boy for ever so long, but such a fussing and mussing as I've had to keep up ever since I came that I'm most tired out and begin to despair at ever getting any quiet. * * I'm old in years but as much of a girl as ever about some things; and one of them is a strong liking for people who don't think much of themselves. Such people being rare birds nowadays ought to be made much of and thought lots of by other people. So don't think I'm demented if I "much" you and call you "*my* boy," for I have a very sincere love and respect for you, dear Alf, not as a boy only, but for many excellent and noble qualities which will make you a good and happy man, I hope. So don't be desponding or blue, for it don't pay, and, though I can't always follow my own preaching, I believe it all the more, and hate to see any one afflicted in a like manner. *

* Good-by, dear Alf, and believe me ever
Your loving friend,
LOUISA.

April 5th, Fast Day, 1860.

MY BELOVED "TETTERBY",—I never forget my Dolphus, but I have been the busiest old Sophy alive, for my "works of art" are in such demand that I shall be one great blot soon. Do you know your topsey-turvey friend has got into the "Atlantic" and receives fifty dollars a story? Well, it's a fact, and I still live.

Mr. Redpath wrote the other day for a bit of poetry on "John Brown," also my autograph, which was such a rich joke. We haven't done laughing at it yet. I send my last "Gazette" infliction; I should have sent more, but I never thought you'd care for such rubbish, so I spared you, but you are heartily welcome to anything of mine that can give you pleasure, my dear Alf.

* * *

Anna and John may be married in June, so we are all full of work and I am full of woe, for I think it's a very "trying" thing to have men come to fetch away a body's relations in this sort of way.

FIRST CHURCH AND OLD WRIGHT TAVERN, CONCORD.
In the Vestry of the Church the Alcott plays were acted.

Father is Superintendent of the Schools and had a great time the other day with all the schools in the Town Hall and speeches, presents, singing, etc. I was deluded into perpetrating a song, and send you a copy of it and the doings generally, for if you still love this smart old place you may care to hear of its progress in all directions.

My paper is at a "focum," and my wits were there a long time ago, so accept a deal of love, dearest of Dolphuses, and don't forget YOUR OLD SOPHY.

"We are still Poking along."

The year 1860 is known in the history of Kansas as the "Dry Year." No rain fell for months, and crops of all kinds were a failure. In the fall my father and a neighbour put all their horses and cows together and drove them into Southern Iowa to winter, a young man named Weber and myself being left in charge. We built a camp on the banks of the Nodaway River, which we named "Camp Wide-Awake," and for eight months we remained there taking care of the stock.

CONCORD, Jan. 25, 1861.

MY DEAREST DOLPHUS,

I've known a good many base people in my life, but I don't think I ever knew a baser than "Sophy Tetterby," for she has neglected her boy in a manner which in the very mildest terms may be called abominable.

We are still poking along as well as could be expected in this "Pilgrim Progress of a wale." We have a Debating Society, Glee Club, Dramatic Association in full operation and give very nice entertainments. I tried to get up some plays for Kansas, feeling wicked over my copious refreshments while my fellow-beings ate bran in Lawrence, but every one was stupid. Nan and John couldn't come, Ab was away and the fussy mammas wouldn't let their daughters play in public to save the world from annihilation, so I rummaged and

THE HOUSE IN WHICH MISS ALCOTT WAS BORN—GERMANTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA—AS IT IS TO-DAY.

begged in vain and then shook off the dust of the town from my feet and retired to wrathful solitude.

They have balls and dance till "the gunpowder runs out at the heels of their boots," but they won't do a thing for the progression of their race, which I call a scandalous state of public feeling. Do tell me about your starvation troubles and I'll send you some of my remarkable productions in the cooking line, a warm flapjack, an oyster pie or a cake like the mammoth one Carlyle speaks of in "Fred the Great," which was fourteen ells long by six broad, containing 5,000 eggs, 36 bushels of flour, one tun of milk, ditto of yeast, ditto of butter, and was cut up by a carpenter with a gigantic knife which went by machinery. It was a real thing and a very interesting account of Prussian jollification.

* * * * *

Abby had your last letter to get the direction, and I can't find it, so I am not able to answer your remarks. I must spin away in my usual topsey-turvey style and trust to luck and your wits to find the sense thereof. I was going to afflict you with a story, but it got absorbed into a scrap-book and I had no second copy so you are spared this time, but if you ever see the "Atlantic" in your part of the world you'll find some of my works of art and may recognize the "Bluggage" style. One in October was "The Modern Cinderelia," about Nan, John, Ab and I, and people were good enough to like it. I'm haunted with a vague idea that I said all that before, but whether I really have or planned to in some of the many letters I haven't written I don't know.

In some of the coming "Atlantics" there will be a "Debby's Début," which deep secret I shouldn't breathe to you if you were any one but my private and particular "Dolphus," so you see I make a grand exception in your favour. * *

Forgive my long silence and still believe that you are dear to your Truly loving SOPHY.

* * Good luck and a better harvest next year. My regards to your friend if he is good to you, and best compliments to the cows and colts that didn't run away.

"In a Vortex of Costumes for a Masquerade Ball."

Here follows another letter received while in Iowa. The allusion to the "Minerva Institute" refers to an account sent to her of a rather amusing incident: Passing along a by road, on a mild December day, I had been startled by the sound of frantic yells from a creek which ran in the rear of a rather pretentious frame farm-house, owned, I think, by a man named Stubbs. Stopping to investigate, I found the mother of the family standing in the water holding with one hand a naked urchin, while with the other she scrubbed him with a large brush, using liberal quantities of soft soap from a bucket on the bank. Sitting shivering on the bank beside the bucket was urchin number two, stripped and waiting his turn. Upon seeing me, and without stopping in her vigorous application of the brush and soap, Mrs. Stubbs volunteered the information that the family was going up to Grandpop's to spend Christmas, and she "'lowed" she would have these 'yer boys clean fer once in their lives. The neighbours said it would be the "first time" if she did get them clean.

Could anything finer be written than the words of encouragement given in this letter?

Sat., March 2, 1861.

DEAREST OF DOLPHUSES,—I should have seized my "dauber" the moment I received your last letter, and written a reply "immediate" if I had not been in a vortex of Costumes for a grand Masquerade Ball at the Town House given by the Dominie and his scholars, nineteen of whom came one after the other to me for ideas or dresses till I was nearly distracted.

It came off last eve and was a fine affair, but would have been finer to me if a certain blond gentleman and lady from Iowa and Syracuse had been there, being partial to the two. Every one had done their best to be splendid, and splendid they were, for many of the gentlemen hired their dresses of costumiers, and so were all as smart as you please in velvet cloaks, plumy hats, slashed doublets, and big boots. The ladies were queens, vivandières, Swiss girls, and the usual pretty and unmeaning characters.

Hire your building, and in May, when my works of art are done, I will come and turn Matron of the "Minerva Institute," established by A. Whitman for the relief of the mental famine in Iowa, and carried on by Mr. and Mrs. Adolphus Tetterby, late of Concord, Mass. I will bring a load of sponges, crash towels and a portable soap factory, and go into the rudiments of an English education with vigor, writing over the door of the wash-house, "cleanliness is next to godliness." I suppose the surrounding districts would be depopulated at once, and you and I regarded as Goths and Vandals.

"Do you prefer me Prim and Proper or Topsey-Turvey?"

It seems so funny to think of "Alf" as a teacher that my mind refuses to do it, and I exult in the cap and coat that keep you "Alf" still, for I hate to have my boys grow up and expect a "Mr." and a hand-shake, instead of a "Bellus" or "Dolphus" and a maternal grab no matter when nor where. How old are you, and do you prefer to have me be Miss Alcott prim and proper, or topsey-turvey "Sophy," who loves you dearly and would fly out of the front windows if she should see you "droppin' in" some day? I'm eight-and-twenty but as young as ever and look upon myself as a kind of Phœnix continually a-rising spick and span

from ashes and fire, so don't you get *old* as you grow *up*, but be "my boy" at heart all your days if you don't get tired of it; no fear that I shall.

You say the last year or two have been hard, unhappy ones to you, and I don't doubt it, but you know in every one's life there comes a waking-up time, and it's well for them if it comes at the beginning and not at the end, when it's too late to mend the past. These times are private revivals and do more good than any public ones, as I know yours has, for the line "now, thank Heaven, I've waked up and mean to stay waked up," was better than a dozen camp-meetings, a bushel of prayers and a year's "experiencing religion." Stand to that and whether the world ever hears of you or not you will be a successful man in the best sense of the word.

There was always something very brave and beautiful to me in the sight of a boy when he first "wakes up," and seeing the worth of life takes it up with a stout heart and resolves to carry it nobly to the end through all disappointments and seeming defeats. I was born with a boy's nature and always had more sympathy for and interest in them than in girls, and have fought my fight for nearly fifteen years with a boy's spirit under my "bib and tucker" and a boy's wrath when I got 'floored," so I'm not preaching like a prim spinster, but freeing my mind like one of "our fellows," and as such I wish you all success, a cheerful heart, an honest tongue and a patient temper to help you through the world, for it's rough going and up-hill work much of the way.

ORCHARD HOUSE, IN CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS, FOR THIRTY YEARS THE HOME OF THE ALCOTTS.

Christened by Louisa, "Apple Slump."

Don't forswear the Eves, but remember Adam wasn't happy alone even in Paradise, so find a little better half by-and-by who don't wear "mittens," and through the power of a genuine woman's love regain and keep your Eden green through a long and happy life. So hopes your loving old friend,

LOU, otherwise your "SOPHY TETTERBY."

"'Hail Columbia' takes the place of 'How are Yer?'"

"Pickle Roost" was the name given to the Pratt mansion, and "Apple Slump" that of the Alcott home.

CONCORD, May 19th, 1861.

DEAR ALF,—If I had not been sewing violently on patriotic blue shirts for the last month I should have written to my "Dolphus," most assuredly, and having at last done my share of the five hundred azure envelopes I lay down my needle and take up my pen with great inward contentment, the first article being my abomination and the last my delight.

Of course, the town is in a high state of topsey-turveyness, for every one is boiling over with excitement, and when quiet Concord does get stirred up it is a sight to behold. All the young men and boys drill with all their might, the women and girls sew and prepare for nurses, the old folks settle the fate of the nation in groves of newspapers, and the children make the streets hideous with distracted drums and fifes. Every one wears cockades wherever one can be stuck, flags flap overhead like parti-colored birds of prey, patriotic balmorals, cravats, handkerchiefs and hats are all the rig, and if we keep on at our present rate everything in heaven and earth will soon be confined to red, white, and blue, and "Hail Columbia" take the place of our Yankee "How are yer?"

Edward Emerson has a company of "Concord Cadets" who poke each other's eyes out, bang their heads and blow themselves up with gunpowder most valiantly, and will do good service by-and-by, I've no doubt, if there is anything left of them when ordered to the field.

We have the "East Quarter Home Guard" consisting of one captain, one drummer, one flag-bearer, and one private, and when the regiment is on parade the effect is superb. They always halt before each house and give several shrill little hurras for every member of the family, after which they march away in a state of breathless enthusiasm.

The regular Concord Company are in Washington and we have long letters from George Prescott, the interesting Messer, and the heroic butcher, Dean.

* * * *

Are you going to war? I long to fly at somebody and free my mind on several points, but there is no opening for me at present, so I study Dr. Howe on "Gunshot Wounds," and get my highly connected self ready to go as nurse when the slow coaches at Washington begin to lay about them to get their fellow-men into a comfortably smashed condition. * * *

We are all robust both at Pickle Roost and Apple Slump; the latter place is exulting in the speedy return of its younger member, who will soon be done in Syracuse and is coming home to turn drawing teacher

in Sanborn's school, as Miss Hammatt leaves in July. Abby says, "I have nice manly letters from Alf, and he seems to have improved mightily in all respects. I wish he would come East again, don't you?" Yes, very much, but not to be shot or otherwise maltreated in the present scrimmage. Write to us as often as you can, and tho' this is a short letter it's a hearty one, dear Alf, from

YOUR LOVING OLD "SOPHY."

"Don't go to War and be Smashed."

Frequent reference to "picters being took" is found in Louisa's letters, by which it can easily be imagined that I was inclined to be persistent in my requests for a portrait of her. The description herein of the White Mountains is, I think, a gem in its way. The closing paragraph referring to her sister's return gives an insight into the depths of her loving heart.

ALPINE HOUSE, GORHAM, N.H.,
Sunday, Aug. 4th, 1861.

MY DEAF ALF,—The direction above will in part account for my long delay in answering your last letters, for the getting ready for this trip was a work of time, and it took a fortnight to get my wits steady after I got here, as I've never seen the White Mountains before and had my hands and eyes full, I assure you.

I was planning to write to you about the plays when father injured his back very much and kept me busy for a week with housekeeping. I told Carrie to let me know what ones she sent, that I might not send duplicates. She was a long time doing so, and when she did Mr. Sanborn told me you had fixed upon your bill and wanted a prologue by him. Our plays are scattered far and wide, and the few that remain are not good ones, so I let the whole thing alone after hearing that you were supplied, and am sorry that you could not have them after all.

Your last letter I brought up here with me, and a rainy Sunday makes the answering of it just the employment I like, for the house is still, the mountains have their nightcaps of cloud on, and the wind whistles like November, so I settle myself in my room and spin a little to my Dolphus in spite of wind or weather.

Our Fourth was celebrated by the usual Regatta, and a house full of cousins. Neddy Connor got knocked into a cocked hat by the wad of a cannon, and Mr. Wheeldon had some fine fireworks in the eve. Sanborn's boys won the races and set off for a camping-out spree on Monadnock as soon as vacation arrived. E. Emerson, Tom Wood, and several others entered College in good style. Will enter when it begins, I mean, but passed excellent examinations.

I suppose Carrie has told you about the Concord Company's return from the War with five men missing either killed or captured in the fight at Bull's Run I don't know all their names, but Cyrus Hosmer and Sydney Rice are among them. Don't you go and be smashed. We can't spare our private and particular boys to be cut up and tormented, so stay at home, my lad, till they get going nicely, and then fire away with a will, and if you get broken cry out "Sophy!" and I'll come and mend you thro' thick and thin.

You speak of Ellsworth and Winthrop, and tho' I never saw either I mourned over their loss as if they were my own brothers, and Winthrop's articles are the best things the "Atlantic" has had this long time.

"Last Week we ascended Mount Washington."

When I go back I will have a "picter" taken for my Dolphus, and as I always take very dark and hunched-up you will be gratified with an image of a stout mulatto lady with a crooked nose, sleepy eyes, and a tempestuous gown.

Now I'll tell you a little about my doings here. I am with Mr. and Mrs. Willis in a big Hotel which looks as if it rained out of the sky and lit in this valley of the Androscoggin with Mountains all around it and a little village near by. The landlord owns a great farm, keeps forty cows, sixty horses, one hundred servants, men and women, and small beasts innumerable. The Grand Trunk Railroad passes the door, so twice a day flocks of travellers come and go, for no other railway comes so far, and stages take people to all points from here. It is very gay about the house, yet if you wish to be quiet, in five minutes you can be in perfect solitude, and an hour's walk will bring you to the most splendid view of Washington, Adams, Madison, and Jefferson, the great guns of the range, besides hundreds of smaller mountains, many of which were never trodden by human feet and are as much unknown as when the world began.

Last week we ascended Mount Washington, the highest of all, being 6,285 feet above the level of the sea. The road up is the most wonderful thing I ever saw, for it is wide, smooth, and winds so that you don't realize what an immense height you are climbing till you see it apparently below you in some parts which you have passed and above in others you have yet to reach. It goes over chasms that make one dizzy to see, round sharp turns where it seems like a hanging balcony as you look down great precipices in some places two miles deep, and often full of snow or blasted trees white and bare as skeletons. The views were astonishing, and when at the Tip Top House it seemed as if I could see the whole world laid out like a map before me, for towns were like flocks of sheep in the green intervals, rivers, lakes, and ponds shone everywhere, and the clouds floated below us in a very curious way, while the air from the snowdrifts below made one forget that it was midsummer. Nothing grows so high, and the stones look as if they were piled there by the Flood.

The mountain horses skip from rock to rock like goats, and look very funny with their heads down slid-

ing and climbing with ladies in old hats, men's coats, and no hoops, on their backs, for the fashions are of no account up there, and every one tumbles about in a free and easy style that just suited me.

The drive down was a thing to remember, for we rattled and banged full trot along a road with all eternity the other side of a low wall in a way that disturbed my heroic mind, and when the trace broke so demented was my state that I offered a stout green garter to mend the fracture, and immortalized that humble article of dress by assisting in the perilous descent of Mount Washington. I wish you and Carrie, Nan and John had been there, for it was a day and a scene to remember all one's life.

From my window I see Mount Carter, Moriah, Hayes and Surprise, besides the Imp and its ugly human profile. Mr. Willis has had a gap cut so we see the blue peak of Madison.

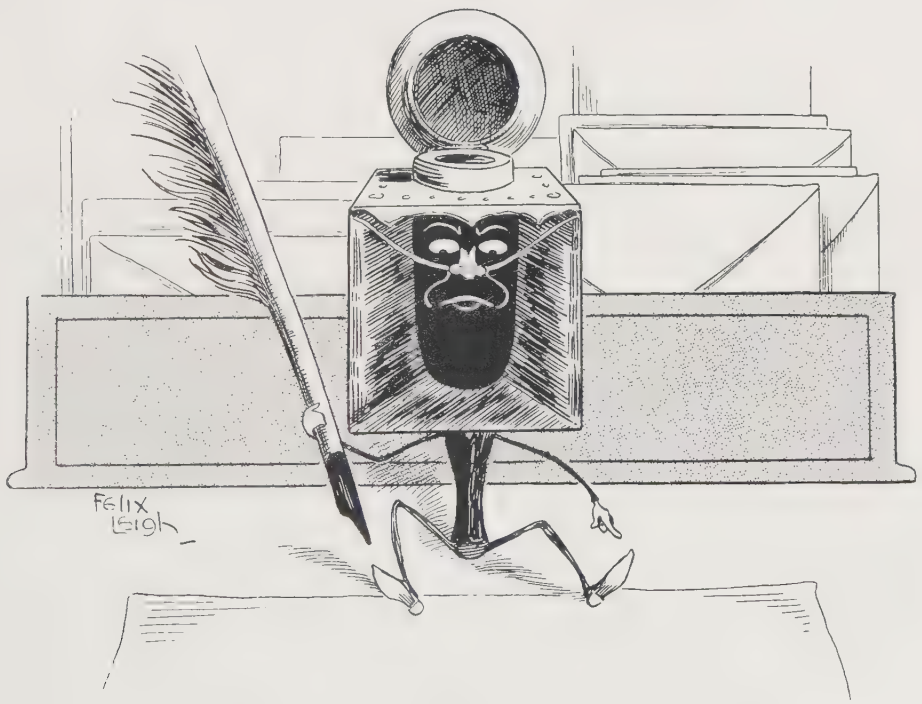
The evenings here are jolly, for there is music, dancing, singing, flirting and high doings generally. A party of young collegians were here a day or two ago and kept us all up till after midnight with their college songs and spirited dancing. No one waits for introductions but all fly up and dance or sing as if at home, and then disappear to be no more seen.

I am enjoying it highly, but Ab returns on Tuesday and I'd rather see her than the whole White Mountain range, as I shall march off on Friday; therefore your next may be sent to Concord, as usual, and you may follow in person as soon as you can.

Good-by, my dear Alf.

Ever your loving friend, LU.

A further charming instalment of Miss Alcott's Letters to her "Laurie" will be published in the Christmas Number.



POOR MR. POT!

"I wish," said Mr. Pot, "that I
Had learnt my lessons better,
For though I've paper, pen and ink,
I cannot write *a letter!*"

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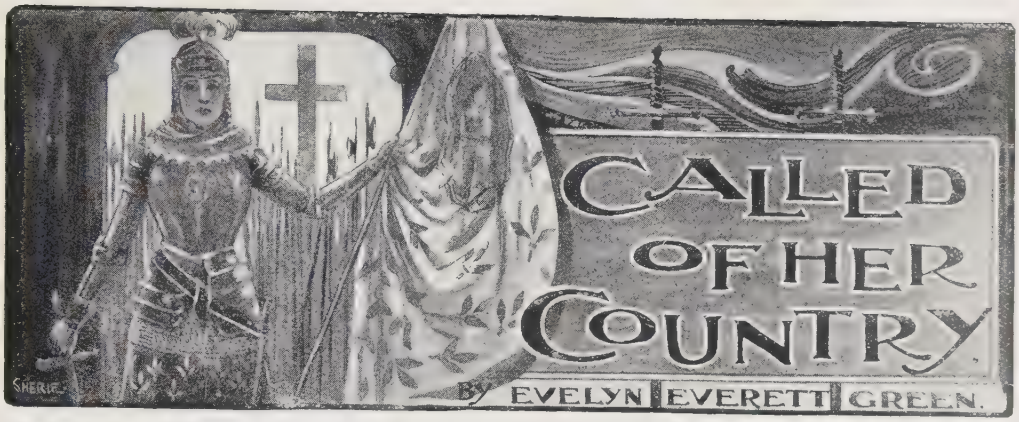
THE MAID OF ORLEANS, WHOM NO PERIL COULD TOUCH DURING HER COUNTRY'S NEED.

See the New Serial, "Called of her country," by Evelyn Everett Green.



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER I.

HOW I FIRST HEARD OF THE MAID.

"THE age of Chivalry—alas!—is dead. The days of miracles are past and gone! What future is there for hapless France? She lies in the dust. How can she hope to rise?"

Sir Guy de Laval looked full in our faces as he spoke these words, and what could one reply? Ah me!—those were sad and sorrowful days for France; and for those who thought upon the bygone glories of the past, when she was mistress of herself, held high her head, and was a power with hostile nations. What would the great Charlemagne say could he see us now? What would even St. Louis of blessed memory feel, could he witness the changes wrought by only a century and a half? Surely it were enough to cause them to turn in their graves! The north lying supine at the feet of the English conqueror, licking his hand, as a dog licks that of his master, lost to all sense of shame that an English infant in his cradle (so to speak) should rule through a regent the fair realm of France, whilst its own lawful King, banished from his capital and from half his kingdom, should keep his Court at Bourges or Chinon, passing his days in idle revelry, heedless of the eclipse of former greatness, careless of the further aggressions threatened by the ever-encroaching foe. Was Orleans to fall next into the greedy maw of the English adventurers? Was it not already threatened? And how could it be saved if nothing could rouse the King from his slothful indifference? O for the days of Chivalry!—the days so long gone by!

Whilst I, Jean de Novelonpont, was musing thus, a curious look overshadowed the face of Bertrand de Poulengy, our comrade and friend, with whom, when we had said adieu to Sir Guy a few miles farther on, I was to return to Vaucouleurs, to pay a long-promised visit there. I had been journeying awhile with Sir Guy in Germany, and he was on his way to the Court at Chinon; for we were all of the Armagnac party, loyal to our rightful monarch, whether King or only Dauphin still, since he had not been crowned, and had adopted no truly regal state or authority; and we were earnestly desirous of seeing him awaken from his lethargy and put himself at the head of an army, resolved to drive out the invaders from the land, and be King of France in truth as well as in name. But so far it did seem as though nothing short of a miracle would effect this, and the days of miracles, as Sir Guy had said, were now past and gone.

Then came the voice of Bertrand, speaking in low tones, as a man speaks who communes with himself; but we heard him, for we were riding over the thick moss of the forest glade, and the horses' feet sank deep and noiseless in the sod, and our fellows had fallen far behind, so that their laughter and talk no longer broke upon our ears. The dreamy stillness of the autumn woodlands was about us, when the songs of the birds are hushed, and the light falls golden through the yellowing leaves, and a glory more solemn than that of spring-tide lies upon the

land. Methinks there is something in the gradual death of the year which attunes our hearts to a certain gentle melancholy; and perchance this was why Sir Guy's words had lacked the ring of hopeful bravery that was natural to one of his temperament, and why Bertrand's eyes were so grave and dreamy, and his voice seemed to come from far away.

"And yet I do bethink me that six months agone I did behold a scene which seems to me to hold within its scope something of miracle and of mystery. I have thought of it by day, and dreamed of it by night, and the memory of it will not leave me, I trow, so long as breath and being remain!"

We turned and looked at him—the pair of us—with eyes which questioned better than our tongues. Bertrand and I had been comrades and friends in boyhood; but of late years we had been much sundered. I had not seen him for above a year till he joined us the previous Wednesday at Nancy, having received a letter I did send to him from thence. He came to beg of me to visit him at his kinsman's house, the Seigneur Robert de Baudricourt of Vaucouleurs; and since my thirst for travel was assuaged, and my purse something over-light to go to Court, I was glad to end my wanderings for the nonce, in a place which I had known and loved in boyhood, and in the company of one whom I still loved as a brother. From the first I had noted that Bertrand was something graver and more thoughtful than had been his wont. Now I did look at him with wonder in my eyes. What could he be speaking of?

He answered as though the question had passed my lips.

"It was May of this present year of grace," he said, "I mind it the better that it was the Feast of the Ascension, and I had kept fast and vigil, had made my confession and received the Holy Sacrament early in the day. I was in my lodging overlooking the market place, and hard by the Castle which as you know hangs, as it were, over the town, guarding or threatening it, as the case may be, when a messenger arrived from my kinsman, De Baudricourt, bidding me to a council which he was holding at noon that day. I went to him without delay; and he did tell me a strange tale. Not long since, so he said, an honest *prud'homme* of the neighbouring village of Burey le Petit, Durand Laxart by name, had asked speech with him, and had then told him that a young niece of his, dwelling in the village of Domrémy, had come to him a few days since, saying it had been revealed to her how that she was to be used by the God of Heaven as an instrument in His hands for the redemption of France; and she had been told in a vision to go first to the Seigneur de Baudricourt, who would then find means whereby she should be sent to the Dauphin (as she called him), whom she was to cause to be made King of France."

"Mort de Dieu!" cried Sir Guy as he gazed at Bertrand with a look betwixt laughter and amaze, "and what said your worshipful uncle to that same message?"

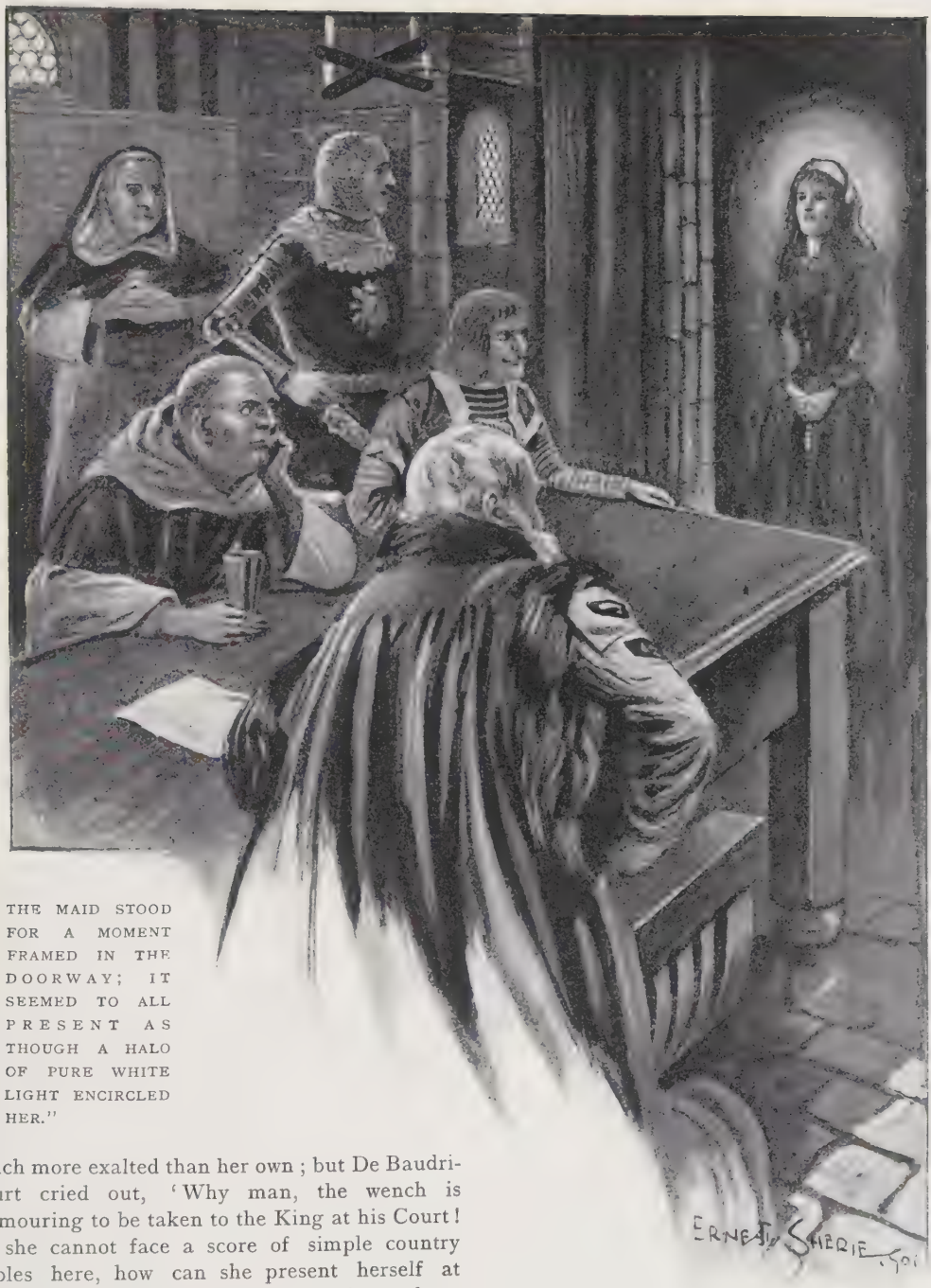
"At the first, he told me, he broke into a great laugh, and bid the honest fellow box the girl's ears well, and send her back to her mother. But he added that the man had been to him once again, and had pleaded that at least he would see his niece before sending her away; and since by this time he was himself somewhat curious to see and to question this village maiden, who came with so strange a tale, he had told Laxart to bring her at noon that very day, and he desired that I and certain others should be there in the hall with him, to hear her story, and perhaps suggest some shrewd question which might help to test her good faith."

"A good thought," spoke Sir Guy, "for it is hard to believe in these dreamers of dreams. I have met such myself—they talk great swelling words, but the world wags on its way in spite of them. They are no prophets; they are bags of wind. They make a stir and a commotion for a brief while, and then they vanish to be heard of no more."

"It may be so," answered Bertrand, whose face was grave, and whose steadfast dark blue eyes had taken a strange shining, "I can only speak of that which I did see and hear. What the future may hold none can say. God alone doth know that."

"Then you saw this maid—and heard her speech. What looked she like?—and what said she?"

"I will tell you all the tale. We were gathered there in the great hall. There were perhaps a score of us; the Seigneur at the head of the council table, the Abbé Perigord on his right, and the Count of La Roche on his left. There were two priests also present, and the chiefest knights and gentlemen of the town. We had all been laughing gaily at the thought of what a village maid of but seventeen summers—or thereabouts—would feel on being introduced into the presence of such a company. We surmised that she would shrink into the very ground for shame. One gentleman declared that it was cruel to ask her to face so many strangers of condition so



"THE MAID STOOD FOR A MOMENT FRAMED IN THE DOORWAY; IT SEEMED TO ALL PRESENT AS THOUGH A HALO OF PURE WHITE LIGHT ENCIRCLED HER."

much more exalted than her own ; but De Baudricourt cried out, 'Why man, the wench is clamouring to be taken to the King at his Court! If she cannot face a score of simple country nobles here, how can she present herself at Chinon? Let her learn her place by a sharp lesson here ; so may she understand that she had best return to her distaff and spindle and leave the crowning of Kings to other hands!' And it was in the midst of the roar of laughter which greeted this speech that the door opened slowly —and we saw the maid of whom we had been talking."

"And she doubtless heard your mirth," spoke I, and he bent his head in assent.

"I trow she did," he answered, "but think you that the ribald jests of mortal men can touch one of the angels of God? She stood for a moment framed in the doorway, and I tell you

I lie not when I declare that it seemed to all present as though a halo of pure white light encircled her. Where the light came from I know not; but many there were, like myself, who noted it. The far end of the hall was dim and dark; but yet we saw her clear as she moved forward. Upon her face was a shining such as I have seen upon none other. She wore the simple peasant dress of her class, with the coif upon her head; yet it seemed to me—ay, and to others too—as though she was habited in rich apparel. Perchance it was that when one had seen her face, one could no longer think upon her raiment. If a queen—if an angel—if a saint from heaven stood in stately calm and dignity before one's eyes, how could we think of the raiment worn? We should see nothing but the grandeur and beauty of the face and form!"

"Mort de Dieu!" cried Sir Guy with his favourite oath, "but you look, good Bertrand, as though you had gazed upon some vision from the unseen world!"

"Nay," he answered gravely, "but I have looked upon the face of one whom God has visited through His saints. I have seen the reflection of His glory in human eyes; and so I can never say with others that the days of miracles are past."

Bertrand spoke with a solemnity and earnestness which could not but impress us deeply. Our eyes begged him to continue, and he told the rest of his tale very simply.

"She came forward with this strange shining in her eyes. She bent before us with simple reverence; but then lifted herself up to her full height and looked straight at De Baudricourt without boldness and without fear, as though she saw in him a tool in the hand of God, and had no other thought for him besides. 'Seigneur,' she said, 'my Lord has bidden me come to you, that you may send me to the Dauphin; for He has given me a message to him which none else may bear; and He has told me that you will do it, therefore I know that you will do so, and your laughter troubles me not.' 'Who is your Lord, my child?' asked De Baudricourt, not laughing now, but pulling at his beard and frowning in perplexity. 'Even the Lord of Heaven, Sire,' she answered, and her hands clasped themselves loosely together and her eyes looked upward with a smile such as I have seen on none other face before. 'He that is my Lord and your Lord and the Lord of this realm of France. But it is His holy will that the Dauphin shall be its King, and that he shall drive back the English, and that the crown shall be set upon his head. And this, with other matters which are for his ear alone I am sent to tell him; and you, good my Lord, are he who shall send me to my King.' Thus she spoke, and looked at us all with those shining eyes of hers; yet it seemed to me she scarce saw us. Her glance did go beyond, as though she were gazing in vision upon the things which were to be."

"She was beautiful, you say?" asked Sir Guy, whose interest was keenly aroused; but who, I saw, was doubtful whether Bertrand had not been deceived by some witchery of fair face and graceful form; for Bertrand, albeit a man of thews and sinews and bold as a lion in fight, was something of the dreamer too, as warriors in all ages have sometimes been.

"Yes—as an angel of God is beautiful," he answered, "ask me not of that; for I can tell you nothing. I know not the hue of her hair or of her eyes, nor what her face was like, nor her form, save that she was tall and very slender; but beautiful—ah yes!—with the beauty which this world cannot give; a beauty which silenced every flippant jest, shamed every scoffing thought, turned ridicule into wonder, contempt into reverence. Whether this wonderful maiden came in truth as a messenger of God or no, at least not one present but saw well that she herself believed heart and soul in her divine commission."

"And what answer did the Seigneur De Baudricourt make to her?"

"He gazed upon her full for awhile, and then he suddenly asked of her, 'And when shall all these wonders come to pass?' She, with her gaze fixed still a little upwards, answered, 'Before mid-Lent next year shall succour reach him; then will the city of Orleans be in sore straight; but help shall come, and the English shall fly before the sword of the Lord. Afterwards shall the Dauphin receive consecration at Rheims, and the crown of France shall be set upon his head, in token that he is the anointed of the Lord.' 'And who has told you all this, my child?' asked De Baudricourt then, answering gently, as one speaks within a church. '*Mes Voix*,' she answered, speaking as one who dreams, and in dreaming listens. 'What voices?' asked De Baudricourt, 'and have you naught but voices to instruct you in such great matters?' 'Yes, Sire,' she answered softly, 'I have seen the great Archangel Michael, his sword drawn in his hand; and I know that he has drawn it for the deliverance of France, and that though he has chosen so humble an instrument as myself, yet that to him and to the Lord of Heaven will be the victory

and the glory.' When she had thus spoken there was a great silence in the hall, in which might have been heard the fall of a pin, and I vow that whether it were trick of summer sunshine or no, the light about the maiden seemed to grow brighter and brighter. Her face was just slightly uplifted as one who listens, and upon her lips there was a smile. 'And I know that you will send me to the Dauphin, Robert de Baudricourt,' she suddenly said, 'because my voices tell me so.' We all looked at De Baudricourt, who sat chin on hand, gazing at the maiden as though he would read her very soul. We waited wondering for him to speak. At last he did. 'Well, my girl, I will think of all this. We have till next year, by your own showing, ere these great things shall come to pass. So get you home, and see what your father and mother say to all this, and whether the Archangel Michael comes again or no. Go home—be a good girl, and we will see what we will see.'"

"Was that all he promised?" spoke Sir Guy with a short laugh, "I trow the maiden dreamer would not thank him for that word! A deliverer of princes to be bidden to go home and be a good girl! What said she to that counsel?"

"Ay, well you may ask," spoke Bertrand with subdued emotion. "Just such a question sprang to my lips as I heard my kinsman's answer. I looked to see her face fall, to see sparks of anger flash from her eyes, or a great disappointment cloud the serene beauty of her countenance. But instead of this a wonderful smile lighted it, and her sweet and resonant voice sounded clear through the hall. 'Ah, now Seigneur, I know you for a good and true man! You speak as did my voices when first I heard them. '*Jeanne, sois bonne et sage enfant; va souvent à l'eglise;*' that was their first message to me, when I was but a child; and now you say the same to me—be a good girl. Thus I know that your heart is good, and that when my Lord's time is come you will send me with His message to the Dauphin.' And so saying she bent again in a modest reverence before us. Yet let me tell you that as she did so, every man of us sprang to his feet by an impulse which each one felt, yet none could explain. As one man we rose, and bowed before her, as she retired from the hall with the simple, stately grace of a young queen. Not till the door had closed behind her did we bethink us that it was to a humble peasant girl we had paid unconscious homage. We who had thought she would well-nigh sink to the dust at sight of us, had been made to feel that we were in the presence of royalty!"

"*Tu Dieu!* but that is a strange story!" quoth Sir Guy with knitted brows. "For many a long day I have heard nought so strange! What think you of it yourself, good Bertrand? For by my troth you speak like a man convinced that a miracle may even yet be wrought for France at the hand of this maid."

"And if I do, is that so strange? Cannot it be that the good God may still speak through His saints to the sons of men, and may raise up a deliverer for us, even as He did in the days of old for His chosen people? Is His arm shortened at all? And is it meet that we Christian knights should trust Him less than did the Jews of old?"

Sir Guy made no reply, but fell into thought, and then asked a sudden question.

"Who is this peasant maid of whom you speak? And where is she now? Is she still abiding content at home, awaiting the time appointed by her visions?"

"I trow that she is," answered Bertrand, "I did hear that she went home without delay, as quietly as she had come. Her name is Jeanne d'Arc. She dwells in the village of Domémy over yonder. Her father is an honest *prud' homme* of the place. She has brothers and a sister. She is known in the village as a pious and gentle maid, ever ready to tend the sick, hold vigil for the dead, take charge of an ailing child, or do any such simple service for the neighbours. She is beloved of all, full of piety and good works, constant in attendance at church, regular in her confession and at mass. So much have I heard from her kinsman Laxart, though for mine own part I have not seen her again."

"And what thinks De Baudricourt of her mission? Does he ever speak of it?"

"Not often; and yet I know that he has not forgotten it. For ofttimes he does sink into a deep reverie; and disjointed words break from him, which tell me whither his thoughts have flown. At the first he did say to me, 'Let the girl go home; let us see if we hear more of her. If this be but a phantasy on her part; if she has been fasting and praying and dreaming, till she knows not what is true and what is her own imagining, why time will cure her of her fancies and follies. If otherwise—well, we will see when the time comes. To act in haste were to act with folly.' And so he dismissed the matter, though, as I say, he doth not forget it, and I think never a day comes but he thinks on it."

"And while the Lord waits, the English are active!" cried Sir Guy with a note of impatience

in his voice. "They are already threatening Orleans. Soon they will march in strength upon it. And if that city once fall, why what hope is there even for such remnants of his kingdom as still remain faithful south of the Loire? The English will have them all. Already they call our King in mockery 'the King of Bourges'; soon even that small kingdom will be reft away, and then what will remain for him or for us? If the visions of the maiden had been true, why doth not the Lord strike now, before Salisbury of England can invest the city. If Orleans fall, all is lost!"

"But Jeanne says that Orleans shall be saved," spoke Bertrand in a low voice, "and if she speaks sooth, must not she and we alike leave the times and seasons in the hand of the Lord?"

Sir Guy shrugged his shoulders, and gave me a shrewd glance, the meaning of which I was at no loss to understand. He thought that Bertrand's head had been something turned, and that he had become a visionary, looking rather for a miracle from heaven than for deliverance from the foe through hard fighting by loyal men marching under the banner of their King. Truth we all knew well that little short of a miracle would arouse the indolent and discouraged Charles, cowed by the English foe, doubtful of his own right to call himself Dauphin, distrustful of his friends, despairing of winning the love or trust of his subjects. But could it indeed be possible that such a miracle could be wrought, and by an instrument so humble as a village maid—this Jeanne d'Arc?

But the time had come when we must say adieu to our comrade, and turn ourselves back to Vaucouleurs, if we were not to be benighted in the forest ere we could reach that place. We halted for our serving men to come up; and as we did so Bertrand said in a low voice to Sir Guy:

"I pray you, Seigneur de Laval, speak no word to His Majesty of this maid and her mission, until such time as news may reach him of her from other sources."

"I will say no word," answered the other, smiling, and so with many friendly words we parted, and Bertrand and I, with one servant behind us, turned our horses' heads back along the road by which we had come.

"Bertrand," I said, as the shadows lengthened and the soft dusk fell in the forest, and the witchery of the evening hour fell upon my heart, "I would that I could see this maiden of whom you speak, this Jeanne d'Arc of the village of Domrémy.

He turned and looked me full in the face; I saw his eyes glow and the colour deepen in his cheeks.

"You would not go to mock, friend Jean de Metz?" he said, for so I am generally named amongst my friends.

"Nay," I answered truthfully, "there is no thought of mockery in my heart; yet I fain would see the Maid."

He paused awhile in thought and then made answer—

"At least we may ride together one day to Domrémy; but whether or no we see the Maid will be according to the will of Heaven."

CHAPTER II.

HOW I FIRST SAW THE MAID.

I DID not forget my desire to see this maiden of Domrémy, nor did Bertrand, I trow, forget the promise, albeit some days passed by ere we put our plan into action.

Bad news kept coming in to the little loyal township of Vaucouleurs. There was no manner of doubt but that the English Regent, Bedford, was resolved to lose no more time, but seek to put beneath his iron heel the whole of the realm of France. Gascony had been English so long that the people could remember nothing different than the rule of the Roy Outremer—as of old they called him. Now all France north of the Loire owned the same sway, and as all men know, the Duke of Burgundy was ally to the English, and hated the Dauphin with a deadly hatred, for the murder of his father—for which no man can justly blame him. True, his love for the English had cooled manifestly since that affair of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester and Jacquelaine of Brabant, in which, as was natural, he took the part of his brother; but although the Duke of Bedford was highly indignant with Duke Humphrey, and gave him no manner of support in his rash expedition, yet the Duke of Burgundy resented upon the English what had been done, and although it did not drive him into the arms of the Dauphin, whom he hated worse, it loosened the bond between him and our foes, and we had hoped it might bring about a better state of things for our party. Yet alas!—this seemed as far as ever from being so; and the Burgundian soldiers still ravaged along our borders, and it seemed ofttimes as though we little loyal community of the Duchy of Bar would be swallowed up altogether betwixt the two encroaching foes. So our hearts were often heavy and our faces grave with fear.

I noted in the manner of the Governor, whose guest I had now become, a great gravity, which

in old days had not been there; for Robert de Baudricourt, as I remembered him, had ever been a man of merry mood, with a great laugh, a ready jest, and that sort of rough, bluff courage that makes light of trouble and peril.

Now, however, we often saw him sunk in some deep reverie, his chin upon his hand, his eyes gazing full into the blaze of the leaping fire of logs, which always flamed upon the hearth in the great hall, where the most part of his time was spent. He would go hunting or hawking by day, or ride hither and thither through the town, looking into matters there, or sit to listen to the affairs of the citizens or soldiers as they were brought before him; and at such times his manner would be much as it had ever been of yore —quick, almost rough, yet not unkindly—whilst the shrewd justice he always meted out won the respect of the people, and made him a favourite in the town. But when the evening fell, and the day's work was done, and after supper we sat in the hall, with the dogs slumbering around us, talking of any news which might have come in, either of raids by the roving Burgundians, or the advance of the English towards Orleans, then these darker moods would fall upon him; and once when he had sat for well-nigh an hour without moving, his brow drawn and furrowed, and his eyes seemingly sunk deeper in his head, Bertrand leaned towards me and whispered in mine ear:

"He is thinking of the Maid of Domrémy!"

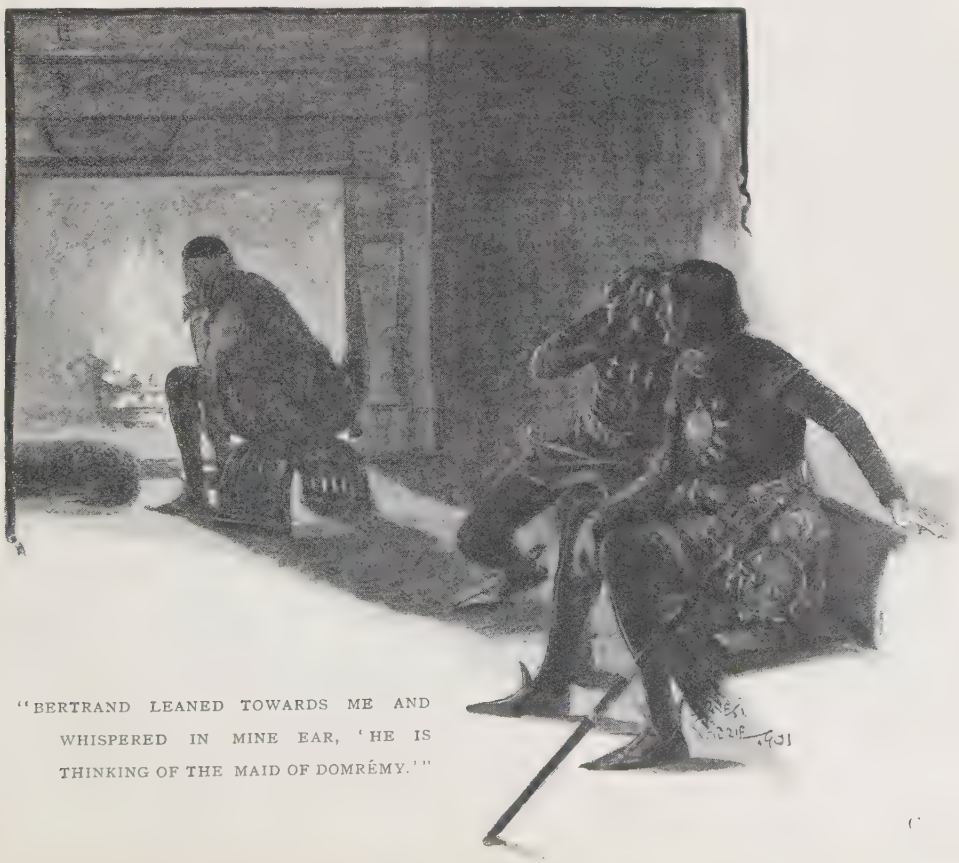
De Baudricourt could not have heard the words, yet when he spoke a brief while later, it almost seemed as though he might have done so.

"Nephew," he said, lifting his head abruptly and gazing across at us, "Tell me again the words of that prophecy of Merlin's, spoken long, long ago, of which men whisper in these days, and of which you did speak to me awhile back."

"Marry, good mine uncle, the prophecy runs thus," answered Bertrand, rising and crossing over towards the great fire before which his kinsman sat, "'That France should be destroyed by the wiles of a woman, and saved and redeemed by a maiden.'"

The bushy brows met in a fierce scowl over the burning eyes; his words came in a great burst of indignation and scorn.

"Ay truly—he spake truly—the wise man—the wizard! A woman to be the ruin of the kingdom! Ay, verily, and has it not been so? Who



"BERTRAND LEANED TOWARDS ME AND WHISPERED IN MINE EAR, 'HE IS THINKING OF THE MAID OF DOMRÉMY.'"

but that wicked Queen Isabeau is at the bottom of the disgraceful Treaty of Troyes, wherein France sold herself into the hands of the English? Did she not repudiate her own son? Did not her hatred burn so fiercely against him that she was ready to tarnish her own good fame and declare him illegitimate, rather than that he should succeed his father as King of France? Did she not give her daughter to the English King in wedlock, that their child might reign over this fair realm? Truly has the kingdom been destroyed by the wiles of a woman! But I trow it will take more than the strength of any maiden to save and redeem it from the woes beneath which it lies crushed!"

"In sooth it doth seem so," answered Bertrand with grave and earnest countenance, "But yet with the good God nothing is impossible. Hath He not said before this that He doth take of the mean and humble to confound the great of the earth? Did not the three hundred with Gideon overcome the hosts of the Moabites? Did not the cake of barley bread overturn the tent and the camp of the foe?"

"Ay, if the good God will arise to work miracles again, such things might be; but how can we look for Him to do so? What manner of man is the Dauphin of France that he should look for divine deliverance? God helps those who help themselves, so says the proverb; but what of those who lie sunk in lethargy or despair, and seek to drown thought or care in folly and riotous living—heedless of the ruin of the realm?"

"There is another proverb, good mine uncle, that tells how man's extremity is God's opportunity," quoth Bertrand thoughtfully, "if we did judge of God's mercy by man's worthiness to receive the same, we might well sink in despair. But His power and His goodness are not limited by our infirmities, and therein alone lies our hope."

De Baudricourt uttered a sound between a snort and a grunt. I knew not what he thought of Bertrand's answer; but that brief dialogue aroused within me afresh the desire I had before expressed to see the maid, Jeanne of Domrémy; and as the sun upon the morrow shone out bright and clear, after a week of heavy rain storms, we did agree that no better opportunity could we have to ride across to the little village, and try whether it were possible to obtain speech with the young girl about whom such interest had been aroused in some breasts.

We spoke no word to De Baudricourt of our intention. Bertrand knew from his manner that he was thinking more and more earnestly of that declaration on the part of the village maiden that her Lord—the King of Heaven—had revealed to her that she must be sent to the Dauphin, to help him to drive out the English from his country, and to place the crown of France upon his head, and that he, Robert de Baudricourt, was the instrument who would be used to speed her on her way. He knew that this thought was weighing upon the mind of his kinsman, and the more so as the time for the fulfilment of the prophecy drew nearer. Autumn had come. Winter was hard at hand; and before Mid-Lent the promised succour to France was to arrive through the means of this maiden—this Jeanne d'Arc.

"He is waiting and watching," spoke Bertrand as we rode through the forest, the thinning leaves of which allowed the sunlight to play merrily upon our path, "He says in his heart that if this thing be of God, the Maid will come again when the time draws near; but that if it is phantasy, or if she be deluded of the Devil, perchance his backwardness will put a check upon her ardour, and we shall hear no more of it. The Abbé Perigord, his Confessor, has bidden him beware lest it be a snare of the Evil One"—and as he spoke these words Bertrand crossed himself, and I did the like, for the forest is an ill place in which to talk of the Devil, as all men know. "But for my part, when I think upon her words, and see again the look of her young face, I cannot believe that she has been thus deceived; albeit we are told that the Devil can make himself appear as an angel of light."

This was the puzzle, of course. But surely the Church had power to discern betwixt the wiles of the Evil One and the finger of God. There were words and signs which any possessed of the Devil must needs fly before. I could not think that the Church need fear deception, even though a village maid might be deceived.

The forest was very beautiful that day, albeit travelling was something slow, owing to the softness of the ground, and the swollen condition of the brooks, which often forced us round by the bridges instead of taking the fords; so that we halted a few miles from Domrémy to bait our horses and to appease our own hunger, for by that time our appetite was sharp-set. It was there, as we sat at table, and talked with mine host, that we heard somewhat more of this Maid, whom we had started forth in hopes to see.

Bertrand was known for the kinsman of De Baudricourt, and all the country side knew well the tale, how that Jeanne d'Arc had gone to him in the spring-tide of the year, demanding an

'WE RODE ACROSS TO THE LITTLE VILLAGE TO TRY WHETHER IT WERE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN SPEECH WITH THE YOUNG GIRL ABOUT WHOM SUCH INTEREST HAD BEEN AROUSED IN SOME BREASTS."—(*p.* 34).

escort to the Dauphin-King of France, for whom she had a message from the King of Heaven, and whom she was to set upon his throne.

"When she came home again, having accomplished nothing," spoke the inn-keeper, leaning his hands upon the table and greatly enjoying the sound of his own voice, "all the village made great mock of her! They called her the King's Marshall, the Little Queen, Jeanne the Prophetess, and I know not what beside. Her father was right wroth with her. Long ago he had a dream about her, which troubled him somewhat, as he seemed to see his daughter in the midst of fighting men, leading them on to battle."

"Did he dream that? Surely that is something strange for the vision of a village *prud'homme* anent his little daughter."

"Ay truly, and at the time he thought little of it, but when all this came to pass he recalled it again; and he smote Jeanne upon the ear with his open hand, and bid her return to her needle and her household tasks, and think no more of matters too great for her. Moreover, he declared that if ever she were to disgrace herself by mingling with men-at-arms, he would call upon her brothers to drown her, and if they disobeyed him, he would take and do it with his own hands!"

"A Spartan father, truly!" murmured Bertrand.

"O ay—but he is a very honest man, is Jacques d'Arc; and he was very wroth at all the talk about his daughter, and he vowed she should wed an honest man, as she is now of age to do, and so forget her dreams and her visions, and take care of her house and her husband and the children the good God should send them—like other wedded wives."

"Then has she indeed wedded?" asked Bertrand earnestly.

"Ah, that is another story!" answered our host, wagging his head and spreading out his hands. "It would take too long were I to tell you all, messires; but so much will I tell. They did find a man who had long desired the pretty Jeanne for his wife, and he did foreswear himself and vow that he had been betrothed to Jeanne with her own free will and consent, and that now he claimed her as his wife. Jeanne, whose courage is high, though she be so quiet and modest in her daily life, did vehemently deny the charge, whereupon the angry father and his friend the claimant of her hand did bring it into the court, and the Maid had to defend herself there from the accusation of broken faith. But by St. Michael and all his angels!—how she did confound them all! She asked no help from lawyers, though one did offer himself to her. She called no witnesses herself; but she questioned the witnesses brought against her, and also the man who would fain have become her lord, and out of their own mouths did she convict them of lying and hypocrisy and conspiracy, so that she was triumphantly acquitted, and her judges called her a most wonderful child, and told her mother to be proud of such a daughter!"

I saw a flush rise to Bertrand's cheek, a flush as of pride and joy. And indeed, I myself rejoiced to hear the end of the tale; for it did seem as though this maiden had been persecuted with rancour and injustice, and that is a thing which no man can quietly endure to hear or see.

"And how have they of Domrémy behaved themselves to her since?" I asked; and Bertrand listened eagerly for the answer.

"O, they have taken her to favour once more; her father has been kind again; her mother ever loved Jeanne much for her gentleness and beauty and helpfulness at home. All the people love her, when not stirred to mockery by such fine pretensions. If she will remain quietly at home like a wise and discreet maiden, no one will long remember against her her foolish words and dreams."

As we rode through the fields and woodlands towards Domrémy, the light began to take the golden hue which it does upon the autumn afternoon, and upon that day it shone with a wonderful radiance such as is not uncommon after rain. We were later than we had meant, but there would be a moon to light us when the sun sank, and both we and our horses knew the roads well; or we could even sleep, if we were so minded, at the *auberge* where we had dined. So we were in no haste or hurry. We picked our way leisurely towards the village, and Bertrand told me of the Fairy Well and the Fairy Tree in the forest hard by, so beloved of the children of Domrémy, and of which so much has been heard of late, though at that time I knew nothing of any such things.

But fairy lore has ever a charm for me, and I bid him show me these same things. So we turned a little aside into the forest, and found ourselves in a lovely glade, where the light shone so soft and golden, and where the songs of the birds sounded so sweet and melodious, that I felt as though we were stepping through an enchanted world, and well could I believe that the fairies danced around the well, sunk deep in its mossy dell, and fringed about with ferns and flowers and the shade of drooping trees.

But fairies there were none visible to our eyes, and we moved softly onwards towards the spreading tree hard by. But ere we reached it, we both drew rein as by a common impulse, for we had seen a sight which arrested and held us spell-bound, ay, and more than that, for the wonder and amaze of it fell also upon the horses we bestrode. For scarcely had we drawn rein, before they both began to tremble and to sweat, and stood with their fore-feet planted, their necks outstretched, their nostrils distended, uttering short gasping, snorting sounds, as a horse will do when overcome by some terror. But for all this they were as rigid as if they had been carved in stone.

And now, what did we see? Let me try and tell, so far as my poor words may avail. Beneath a spreading tree just a stone's throw to the right of where we stood, and with nothing between to hinder our view of her, a peasant maiden, dressed in the white coif, red skirt, and jacket and kerchief of her class, had been bending over some fine embroidery which she held in her hands. We just caught a glimpse of her thus before the strange thing happened which caused us to stop short, as though some power from without restrained us.

Hard by, as I know now, stood the village, shut out from view by the trees, with its little church, and the homestead of Jacques d'Arc nestling almost within its shadow. At the moment of which I speak the bell rang forth for the Angelus, with a full, sweet tone of silvery melody; and at the very same instant the work dropped from the girl's hands, and she sank upon her knees. At the first moment, although instinctively we reined back our horses and uncovered our heads, I had no thought but that she was a devout maiden following the office of the Church out here in the wood. But as she turned her upraised face a little towards us, I saw upon it such a look, as I have never seen on human countenance before, nor have ever seen (save upon hers) since. A light seemed to shine either from it or upon it—how can I tell which?—a light so pure and heavenly that no words can fully describe it, but which seemed like the radiance of heaven itself. Her eyes were raised towards the sky, her lips parted, and through the breathless hush of silence which had fallen upon the wood, we heard the soft, sweet tones of her voice.

"Speak, my Lord—Thy servant heareth!"

It was then that our horses showed the signs of terror of which I have before spoken. For myself, I saw nothing save the shining face of the Maid—I knew who it was—there was no need for Bertrand's breathless whisper—"It is she—herself!"—I knew it in my heart before. She knelt there amid the fallen leaves, her face raised, her lips parted, her eyes shining as surely never human eyes have shone before. A deep strange hush had fallen over all nature, broken only by the gentle music of the bell. The ruddy gold light of approaching sunset bathed all the wood in glory, and the rays fell upon the kneeling figure forming a halo of glory round it. But she did not heed, she did not see. She was as one in a trance, insensible to outward vision. Once and again her lips moved, but we heard no word proceed from them, only the wrapt look upon her face increased in intensity, and once I thought (for I could not turn my gaze away) that I saw the gleam of tears in her eyes.

The bell ceased as we stood thus motionless, and as the last note vibrated through the still air, a change came over the Maid. Her head drooped, she hid her face in her hands, and thus she knelt as one absorbed in an intensity of prayer. Even as this happened, the peculiar glory of the sunlight seemed to change. It shone still, but without such wonderful glow, and our horses at the same time ceased their trembling and their rigid stillness of pose. They shook their heads and jingled their bits, as though striving to throw off some terrifying impression.

"Let us withdraw from her sight," whispered Bertrand touching my arm, and very willingly I acceded to this suggestion, and we silently pressed into the shadow of some great oaks, which stood hard by, the trunks of which hid us well from view. It seemed almost like a species of sacrilege to stand there watching the Maid at her prayers, and yet I vow, that until the bell ceased we had no more power to move than our horses. Why we were holden by this strange spell I know not. I can only speak the truth. We saw nothing and we heard nothing of any miraculous kind, and yet we were like men in a dream, bound hand and foot by invisible bonds, a witness of something unseen to ourselves, which we saw was visible to another.

Beneath the deep shadow of the oaks we looked back. The Maid had risen to her feet by this, and was stooping to pick up her fallen work. That done, she stood awhile in deep thought, her face turned towards the little church, whence the bell had only just ceased to sound.

I saw her clearly then—a maiden slim and tall, so slender that the rather clumsy peasant dress

she wore could not give breadth or awkwardness to her lithe figure. The coif had slipped a little out of place, and some tresses of waving hair had escaped from beneath it, tresses that looked dark till the sun touched them, and then glowed like burnished gold. Her face was pale, with features in no way marked, but so sweet and serene was the expression of the face, so wonderful was the depth of the great dark eyes, that one was lost in admiration of her beauty, albeit unable to define wherein that beauty lay.

When we started forth, I had meant to try and seek speech with this Jeanne—this Maid of Domrémy—and to ask her of her mission, and whether she were still believing that she would have power to carry it out; but this purpose now died within me.

How could I dare question such a being as to her visions? Had I not seen how she was visited by sound or sight not sensible to those around her? Had I not in some sort been witness to a miracle? Was it for us to approach and ask of her what had been revealed thus? No!—a thousand times no! If the good God had given her a message, she would know when and where to deliver it. She had spoken before of her voices. Let them instruct her. Let not men seek to interfere. And so we remained where we were, hidden in the deep shadows, whilst Jeanne with bent head and lingering, graceful steps, utterly unconscious of the eyes that watched her, went slowly out of sight along the glade which led towards the village and her home.

Only when she had disappeared did we venture to move on in her wake, and so passed by the low-browed house, set in its well-tended little garden, where the d'Arc family lived. It lay close to the church, and bore a look of pleasant home-like comfort. We saw Jeanne bending tenderly over a chair in which reclined the bent form of a little crippled sister. We even heard the soft, sweet voice of the Maid, as she answered some question asked her from within the open door. Then she lifted the bent form in her arms, and I did note how strong that slim frame must be, for the burden seemed as nothing to her as she bore it within the house; and then she disappeared from view, and we rode onwards together.

"There, my friend," spoke Bertrand at last, "I have kept my promise, you have seen the Maid."

"Yes," I answered gravely, "I have seen the Maid," and after that we spoke no word for many a mile.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE MAID CAME TO VAUCOULEURS.

IT may yet be remembered by some how early the snow came that year, to the eastern portion of France at least. I think scarce a week had passed since our journey to Domrémy, before the wild gale from the north-east brought a heavy snow which lay white upon the ground for many long weeks, and grew deeper and deeper as more fell, till the wolves ravaged right up to the very walls of Vaucouleurs, and some of the country villages were quite cut off from intercourse with the world.

Thus it came about that I was shut up in Vaucouleurs with my good comrade and friend Bertrand, in the Castle of which Robert de Baudricourt was governor, and for awhile little news reached us from the outside world, though such news as did penetrate to our hearing was all of disaster for the arms of France.

We never spoke to De Baudricourt of our expedition to Domrémy, nor told him that we had seen the Maid again. Yet methinks not a day passed without our thinking of her, recalling something of that wonderful look we had seen upon her face, and asking in our hearts whether indeed she were truly visited by heavenly visions sent by God, and whether she indeed heard voices which could reach no ears but hers.

I observed that Bertrand was more regular in attendance at the services of the Church, and especially at Mass, than was usual with young knights in those days, and for my part, I felt a stronger desire after such spiritual aids than I ever remember to have done in my life before. It became a regular thing with us to attend the early Mass in the little chapel of the Castle; and, instead of growing lax (as I had done before many times in my roving life), as to attending confession and receiving the Holy Communion, I now began to feel the need for both, as though I were preparing me for some great and solemn undertaking. I cannot well express in words the feeling which possessed me—ay, and Bertrand too—for we began to speak of the matter one with another—but it seemed to us both as though a high and holy task lay before us, for which we must needs prepare ourselves with fasting and prayer; I wondered if, perhaps, it was thus that knights and men in days of old felt when they had taken the Red Cross, and had pledged themselves to some Crusade in the East.

Well, thus matters went on, quietly enough outwardly, till the Feast of the Nativity had come and gone, and with that Feast came a wonderful

THE MAID STOOD AWHILE IN DEEP THOUGHT, HER FACE TURNED TOWARDS THE LITTLE CHURCH, WHENCE THE BELL HAD ONLY JUST CEASED TO SOUND."—(*p.* 37).

change in the weather. The frost yielded, the south wind blew soft, the snow melted away one scarce knew how, and a breath of spring seemed already in the air, though we did not dare to hope that winter was gone for good and all.

It was just when the year had turned that we heard a rumour in the town, and it was in this wise that it reached our ears. De Baudricourt had been out with his dogs, chasing away the wolves back into their forest lairs. He had left us some business to attend to for him within the Castle, else should we doubtless have been of the party. But he was the most sagacious huntsman of the district, and a rare day's sport they did have, killing more than a score of wolves, to the great joy of the townsfolk and of the country people without the walls. It was dark ere he got home, and he came in covered with mud from head to foot; the dogs, too, were so plastered over, that they had to be given to the servants to clean ere they could take their wonted places beside the fire; and some of the poor beasts had ugly wounds which needed to be washed and dressed. But what struck us most was that De Baudricourt, albeit so successful in his hunt, seemed little pleased with his day's work. His face was dark, as though a thundercloud lay athwart it, and he gave but curt answers to our questions, as he stood steaming before the fire and quaffing a great tankard of spiced wine which was brought to him. Then he betook himself to his own chamber to get him dry garments, and when he came down supper was already served. He sat him down at the head of the table still silent and morose, and though he fell with right good will upon the viands, he scarce opened his lips the while, and we in our turn grew silent, for we feared that he had heard the news of some disaster to the French arms, which he was brooding over in silent gloom.

But when the retainers and men-at-arms had disappeared, and we had gathered round the fire at the far end of the hall as was our wont, then he suddenly began to speak.

"Went ye into the town to-day?" he suddenly asked of us.

We answered him, Nay, that we had been occupied all day within the Castle over the services there he had left us to perform.

"And have you heard nought of the commotion going on there?"

"We have heard nought. Pray what hath befallen, good sir? Is it some disaster? Hath Orleans fallen into the hands of the English?" For that was the great fear possessing all loyal minds at this period.

"Nay, it is nought so bad as that," answered De Baudricourt, "and yet it is bad enough, I trow. That mad girl from Domrémy is now in the town, telling all men that Robert de Baudricourt hath been appointed of God to send her to the Dauphin at Chinon, and that she must needs start thither soon, to do the work appointed her of heaven. *Dents de Dieu!*—the folly of it is enough to raise the hair on one's head! Send a little *paysanne* to the King with a wild story like hers! 'Tis enough to make the name of De Baudricourt the laughing stock of the whole country!"

I felt a great throb at heart when I heard these words. Then the Maid had not forgot! This time of waiting had not bred either indifference or doubt. The time appointed was drawing near, and she had come to Vaucouleurs once more, to do that which was required of her! O, was it not wonderful? Must not it be of heaven this thing? And should we seek to put the message aside as a thing of nought?

Bertrand was already speaking eagerly with his kinsman; but it seemed as though his words did only serve to irritate the Governor the more. In my heart I was sure that had he been certain the Maid was an impostor, he would have been in no wise troubled or disturbed, but would have contented himself by sharply ordering her to leave the town and return home and trouble him no more. It was because he was torn by doubts as to her mission that he was thus perturbed in spirit. He dared not treat her in this summary fashion, lest haply he should be found to be fighting against God; and yet he found it hard to believe that any deliverance for hapless France could come through the hands of a simple, unlettered peasant girl; and he shrank with a strong man's dislike from making himself in any sort an object of ridicule, or of seeming to give credence to a wild tale of visions and voices, such as the world would laugh to scorn. So he was filled with doubt and perplexity, and this betrayed itself in gloomy looks and in harsh speech.

"Tush, boy! You are but an idle dreamer. I saw before that you were fooled by a pretty face and a silvery voice. Go to!—your words are but phantasy! Who believes in miracles now?"

"If we believe in the power of the good God, shall we not also believe that He can work even miracles at His holy will?"

"Poof—miracles!—the dreams of a vain and silly girl!" scoffed De Baudricourt, "I am sick of her name already!" Then he suddenly

turned upon me and spoke. "Jean de Metz, you are a knight of parts. You have sense and discretion above your years, and are no feather-head like Bertrand here. Will you undertake a mission from me to this maiden? Ask of her the story of her pretended mission. Seek to discover from her whether she be speaking truth, or whether she be seeking to deceive. Catch her in her speech if it may be. See whether the tale she tells hang together, and then come and report to me. If she is a mad woman, why should I be troubled with her? She cannot go to the Dauphin yet, come what may. The melting snows have laid the valleys under water, the roads are impassable; horses would stick fast in the mire, and we are not at the end of winter yet. She must needs wait awhile, whatever her message may be, but I would have you get speech of her, and straightly question her from me. Then if it seem well, I can see her again; but if you be willing, you shall do so first."

I was more than willing. I was rejoiced to have this occasion for getting speech with the Maid. I spoke no word of having had sight of her already, but fell in with De Baudricourt's wish that I should go to her as if a mere passing stranger, and only afterwards reveal myself as his emissary. I slept but little all that night, making plans as to all that I should speak when I saw her on the morrow, and, rising early, I betook myself to Mass, not to the private chapel of the Castle, but to one of the churches in the town, though I could not have said why it was that I was moved to do this. Yet as I knelt in my place I knew; for there amongst the worshippers, her face

"I MADE AS THOUGH I WERE A PASSING STRANGER, AND ADDRESSED HER IN FRIENDLY FASHION, RATHER AS ONE WHO LAUGHS."—(*p.* 42).

upraised and full of holy joy, her eyes alight with the depth of her devotion, her hands clasped in an ecstasy of prayer, was the Maid herself; and I found it hard to turn my eyes from her wonderful face, and to think upon the office as it was recited by the priest.

I did not seek speech of her then, for she tarried long in the church over her prayers. I felt at last like one espying on another, and so I came away. But after breakfast, as the sun shone forth and began to light up the narrow streets of the little town, I sallied forth again alone, and asked of the first citizen I met where could be found the dwelling place of one Jeanne d'Arc, from Domrémy, who was paying a visit to the town.

I had scarce need to say so much as this. It seemed that all the people in the town had heard of the arrival of the Maid. I know not whether they believed in her mission, or whether they scoffed at it; but at least it was the talk of the place how she had come before, and fearlessly faced the Governor and his council, and had made her great demand from him, and how she had come once again, now that the year was born and Lent approaching, in the which she had said she must seek and find the Dauphin. So that he was able at once to give me the information I asked, and told me that the girl was lodging with Henri Leroyer the saddler, and Catherine his wife, naming the street where they dwelt, but adding that I should have no trouble in finding the house, for the people flocked to it to get a sight of the Maid, and to ask her questions concerning her mission hither, and what she thought she was about to accomplish.

And truly I did find that this honest citizen had spoken the truth, for as I turned into the narrow street where Leroyer lived, I saw quite a concourse of people gathered about the house, and though they made way for me to approach, knowing that I was from the Castle, I saw that they were very eager to get sight or speech of the Maid, who was standing at the open door of the shop, and speaking in an earnest fashion to those nearest her.

I made as though I were a passing stranger, who had just heard somewhat of her matter from the bystanders, and I addressed her in friendly fashion, rather as one who laughs.

"What are you doing here, *ma mie?* And what is this I hear? Is it not written in the book of fate that the King or Dauphin of France must be overcome of England's King, and that we must all become English, or else be driven into the sea, or banished from the realm?"

Then for the first time her wonderful eyes fastened themselves on my face, and I felt as though my very soul were being read.

"Nay sire," she answered, and there was something so flute-like and penetrating in her tones that they seemed to sink into my very soul, "but the Lord of Heaven Himself is about to fight for France, and He has sent me to the Governor here, who will direct me to the Dauphin, who knows nothing of me as yet. But I am to bring him help, and that by Mid-Lent. So I pray you gentle knight, go tell Robert de Baudricourt that he must needs bestir himself in this business, for my voices tell me that the hour is at hand when, come what may, I must to Chinon, even though I wear my legs to the knees in going thither."

"Why should I tell this to the Seigneur de Baudricourt?" I asked, marvelling at her words and the fashion of her speech.

"Because he has sent you to me," she answered, her eyes still on my face, "and I thank him for having chosen so gracious a messenger; for you have a good heart, and you are no mocker of the things my Lord has revealed to me; and you will be one of those to do His will, and to bring me safely to the Dauphin."

Half confounded by her words I asked:

"Who is your Lord?"

"It is God," she answered, and bent her head in lowly reverence.

And then I did a strange thing; but it seemed to be forced upon me from above by a power I could not withstand. I fell suddenly to my knees before her, and put up my clasped hands, as we do when we pay homage for our lands and honours to our liege lord. And, I speak truth, and nought else, the Maid put her hands over mine just as our lord or sovereign should do, and though I dare swear she had never heard my name before, she said:

"Jean de Novelopont de Metz, my Lord receives you as His faithful knight and servant. He will be with us now and to the end."

And the people all uncovered and stood bareheaded round us, whilst I felt as though I had received a mandate from Heaven.

Then I went into the house with Jeanne, and asked her of herself, and of her visions and voices. She told me of them with the gentle frankness of a child, but with a reverence and humility which was beautiful to see, and which was in strange contrast to some of the things she spoke, wherein she told how that she herself was to be used of Heaven for the salvation of France.

I cannot give her words as she spoke them,

sitting there in the window, the light upon her face, her eyes fixed more often upon the sunny sky than upon her interlocutor, though now and again she swept me with one of her wonderful glances. She told me how from a child she had heard voices, which she knew to be from above, speaking to her, bidding her to be good, to go to the church, to attend to her simple duties at home. But as she grew older there came a change. She remembered the day when first she saw a wonderful white light hovering above her; and this light came again, and yet again; and the third time she saw in it the figure of an angel —more than that—of the Archangel Michael himself—the warrior of Heaven; and from him she first received the message that she was to be used for the deliverance of her people. She was long in understanding what this meant. St. Michael told her she should receive other angelic visitors, and often after this St. Catherine and St. Margaret appeared to her, and told her what was required of her, and what she must do. At first she was greatly affrighted, and wept, and besought them to find some other for the task, since she was but a humble country maid, and knew nothing of the art of warfare, and shuddered at the sight of blood. But they told her to be brave, to trust in the Lord, to think only of Him and of His holy will towards her. And so, by degrees, she lost all her fears, knowing that it was not of herself she would do this thing, and that her angels would be with her, her saints would watch over her, and her voices direct her in all that she should speak or do.

"And now," she added, clasping her hands, and looking full into my face, "now do they tell me that the time is at hand. Since last Ascensiontide they have bid me wait in quietness for the appointed hour; but of late my voices have spoken words which may not be set aside. I must be sent to the Dauphin. Orleans must be saved from the hosts of the English which encompass it. I am appointed for this task, and I shall accomplish it by the grace of my Lord and His holy saints. Then the crown must be set upon the head of the Dauphin, and he must be anointed as the King. After that my task will be done; but not till then. And now I must needs set forth upon the appointed way. To the Dauphin I must go, to speak to him of things I may tell to none other; and the Sieur Robert de Baudricourt is appointed of Heaven to send me to Chinon. Wherefore, I pray you, gentle knight, bid him no longer delay; for I am straightened in spirit till I may be about my Lord's business, and He would not have me tarry longer."

I talked with her long and earnestly. Not that I doubted her. I could not do so. Although no voices came to me, yet my heart was penetrated by a conviction so deep and poignant that to doubt would have been impossible. France had been sold and betrayed by one bad woman; but here was the Maid who should arise to save! I knew it in my heart; yet I still spoke on and asked questions, for I must needs satisfy De Baudricourt, I must needs be able to answer all that he would certainly ask.

"How old are you, fair maiden?" I asked, as at length I rose to depart, and she stood, tall and slim, before me, straight as a young poplar, graceful, despite her coarse raiment, her feet and hands well fashioned, her limbs shapely and supple.

"I was seventeen last week," she answered simply, "the fifth of January is my *jour de fête*."

"And your parents, what think they of this? What said they when you bid them farewell for such an errand?"

The tears gathered slowly in her beautiful eyes; but they did not fall. She answered in a low voice:

"In sooth they know not for what I did leave them. They believed I went but to visit a sick friend. I did not dare to tell them all, lest my father should hold me back. He is very slow to believe my mission; he chides me bitterly if ever word be spoken anent it. Is it not always so when the Lord uses one of His children? Even our Lord's brethren and sisters believed not on Him. How can the servant be greater than his Lord?"

"You fear not, then, to disobey your parents?"

I had need to put this question; for it was one that De Baudricourt had insisted upon, for he knew something of Jacque d'Arc's opposition to his daughter's proposed campaign.

"I must obey my Lord even above my earthly parents," was her steadfast reply; "His word must stand the first. He knows all, and He will pardon. He knows that I love my father and my mother, and that if I only pleased myself I should never leave their side."

Then suddenly as she spoke a strange look of awe fell upon her; I think she had forgotten my presence, for when she spoke, her words were so low that I could scarce hear them. "I go to my death!" she whispered, the colour ebbing from her face; "but I am in the hands of my Lord; His will alone can be done."

I went out from her presence with bent head. What did those last words signify—when hitherto all she had spoken was of deliverance, of victory! She spoke them without knowing it. Of that I

was assured; and therefore I vowed to keep them locked in my heart. But I knew that I should never forget them.

I found Robert de Baudricourt awaiting my coming in the great hall, pacing restlessly to and fro. Bertrand was with him, and I saw by the tense expression upon his face that he was eager for my report. I gave him one quick glance upon entering, which I trow he read and understood; but to De Baudricourt I spoke with caution and with measured words, for he was a man whose scorn and ridicule were easily aroused, and I knew that Bertrand had fallen into a kind of contempt with him for that he had so quickly believed in the mission of the Maid.

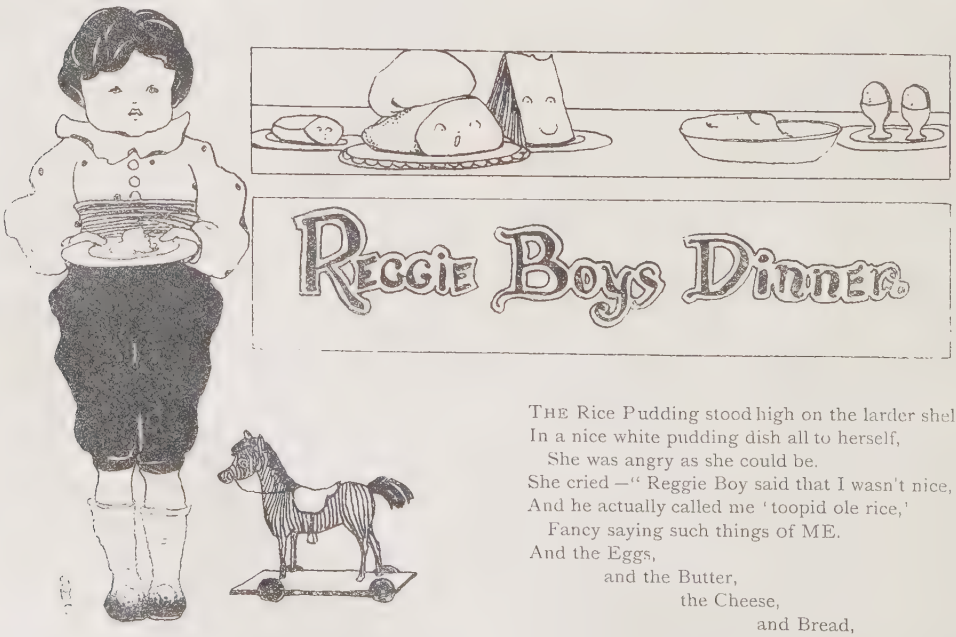
"Well, and what make you of the girl? Is she witch, or mad, or possessed by some spirit of vain-glory and ambition? What has she said to you, and what think you of her?"

"In all truth, my lord, I believe her to be honest; and more than this, I believe her to be directed of God. Strange as it may seem; yet such things have been before, and who are we to say that God's arm is shortened, or that He is not the same as in the days of old? I have closely questioned the Maid as to her visions and voices, and I cannot believe them delusions of the senses. You may ask, are they of the Devil? Then would I say, if there be doubt, let the Abbé Perigord approach her with holy water, with exorcisms, or with such sacred words and signs as devils must needs flee before. Then if it be established that the thing is not of the Evil One, we may the better regard it as from the Lord of whom she speaks. At least, if she can stand this test, I would do this much for her, give her a small escort to Chinon, with a letter to the Dauphin. After that your responsibility will cease. The matter will be in the hands of the King and his advisers."

"Ay, after I have made myself the laughing stock of the realm!" burst out De Baudricourt grimly; yet after he had questioned me again, and yet again, and had even held one interview himself with the Maid, who came of her own accord to the Castle to ask for him one day, he seemed to come to some decision, after much thought and wavering. Bringing out one of his rattling oaths, he cried:

"Then if she can bear the touch of holy water, and the sign of book and taper and bell—and I know not what beside—then shall she be sent to the King at Chinon, and I, Robert de Baudricourt, will send her—come what may of the mission!"

(To be continued.)



THE Rice Pudding stood high on the larder shelf,
In a nice white pudding dish all to herself,
She was angry as she could be.
She cried—"Reggie Boy said that I wasn't nice,
And he actually called me 'toopid ole rice,'
Fancy saying such things of ME.
And the Eggs,
and the Butter,
the Cheese,
and Bread,
All cried out together—'How shocking,' they said,
'Just fancy his not liking Rice!'

E. A. M.

By KATHLEEN WALDRON.

NO one is any longer surprised when the foremost places in games and pastimes popular with ladies are calmly appropriated by junior enthusiasts. It has been done so often. One hears instead, "how easy it is for young girls to do these things well," "how nice it is not to have nerves," and how these elders "only wished that they had short petticoats, and did not *mind* tumbling in learning to skate, or ride, or bicycle." There are always people who feel so delightfully different in every way from those who are at an age that has been left behind. But it is open to doubt whether, after all, the girls who do well in games, deserve that their success should be attributed so lightly to the "natural advantages" of extreme youth. Nerves are, unfortunately, not the sole prerogative of grown-up people, although often their juniors are less anxiously flustered, because they are more diffident. There may even be positive disadvantages which have to be overcome by a girl with natural abilities. Experience counts for a good deal in most games, and even although it sometimes seems that a girl suddenly finds some "golden road" to success, it is seldom or never without having overcome some difficulties.

Lawn tennis is certainly a game which it seems difficult for girls to play really well while they are still quite young. No game gives rise to more misleading remarks. "Of course these children can play," one hears people say; "of course they can run about; they always are running about." Yet, as a rule, it is just this running about that young girls do not bring off. During the last three seasons, without one exception, the few young girls who have entered for open tournaments, have all shown promise, but have been deficient in quickness; all have developed "quickness about the court" as they grow up, and none have started with it. And this is the more remarkable, because in hockey, young girls have, as a rule, an advantage in sheer pace. But then, of course, anyone who has played both games can easily find the explanation in the different sort of quickness required for lawn tennis and for the hockey field. In tennis it is a short run, depending greatly on the capacity for being quick in starting, that is required, and "quickness about the court," does not so often mean sheer pace in running the length of the court as being very wide-awake in foreseeing what direction has to be followed, and then being very quick in turning about and correcting one's preconceived ideas of what is required by the actual necessity of the next moment. It is another axiom with grown-up people, that "girls have nothing to think of, nothing on their minds, and so, of course, they can be wide-awake in a game." But that is a fallacy. Girls have ever so much to think of, and they have not,

so much as grown-up people have, the capacity for deliberately setting disturbing thoughts aside and concentrating their minds on the immediate employment. When you have been thoroughly drilled into really important things, as reflections on next day's dinner, and where you shall go for your next coat and skirt, you get out of the habit of reflecting, rather vaguely, perhaps, about things in general. A merely definite thought like dinner or clothes is easily set aside. Not so vaguer matters; and it is not an uncommon sight to see a youthful competitor lapse for a few seconds into a day dream, even in a tournament—and that to the extent of getting hit by her partner's service or return through not watching the ball. It is to these tendencies, we fancy, that the accusations of "laziness," so often made against young players, are due. And it is, perhaps, a good deal owing to difficulties of the sort that so few very young girls have done really great things since the days of Miss Lottie Dod. Certainly a great many girls would improve if, besides studying the physical science of the game, they remembered to keep as alert as possible in mind—alertness physically in getting to the right place at the right time would be materially aided.

M. GRAHAM.
The Lady Golf Champion of England, 1901-2.

But there are, of course, other reasons why, in each of these annual articles, there has been no stupendous success to record in the lawn tennis world. Very few girls have played in open tournaments. Lawn tennis has, in fact, been sadly in want of new blood for some time, and it seemed as though those who had already won distinctions would go on playing among themselves at big tournaments until, with their ultimate end, the end of the game would have come. For people very soon leave off playing a game in private when there are no big tournaments, even although they may never intend to play in a tournament themselves. It "goes out of fashion." This season, however, lawn tennis has again risen, after a gradual turning of the tide, to great popularity, and one of the most favourable signs for the pastime has been the appearance of many young players. It is true that no very big success has been achieved by a very young girl, still, quite a number have been playing, and there is every probability that they will, with experience, go as far as some girls who have been mentioned in former articles for this paper. One year we included Miss C. M. Wilson, who was at the time about the only young girl playing. Since then, Miss Wilson, who is still among the youngest players, has won the Kent County Cup, and also the Durham Cup outright, having held both for three years in succession. She has also won the East of England Championship at Felixstowe, and holds the challenge cup for the first year of its institution. We shall hear of her in the biggest meetings, without doubt, before long, for her win at Felixstowe was gained against some very strong opponents. Another year, also as rather an exception, we mentioned Miss Greene, who has since then greatly improved, and has come very much to the fore. Recently, at Brighton, she won one set from Mrs. Sterry, the lady champion of England. Yet both players when they first entered for open meetings had

a great deal to learn. And this is also the case with those young girls who have since appeared. They would beat the majority of their schoolfellows or their local friends, perhaps, but measured by the high standard of open meetings they are promising beginners.

Miss B. Tulloch has for several seasons been well known in the lawn tennis world, and when her young sister, Miss O. Tulloch, entered for the open tournament at Chiswick Park this season, her play was followed with much interest. She has since played at one or two other meetings, and is so fond of the game that with greater experience she is likely to make a player. At the Felixstowe tournament there were quite a number of young competitors. Amongst these Miss Regina Evans showed especial promise. Playing with Mrs. Meaden in the ladies' doubles, she again and again called forth applause by brilliant volleying, and after winning many ties she and her partner took first prizes. It is only lately that she has played at the net as she did in her games with Mrs. Meaden, and her volleying was most effective. She is at present the champion of Mayfield, a school where both hockey and lawn tennis reach a high standard. Two other young players, who entered for their first open meeting at Colchester and afterwards played at Felixstowe, are Miss M. B. Squire and Miss Phyllis Squire. Miss M. B. Squire is a member of the Cumberland lawn tennis club, where she has won several prizes. At Felixstowe, playing with Mr. Orr, she won a first prize in the mixed double handicap. Throughout that event she played very well, and very steadily. Miss Phyllis Squire, although she was not a prize-winner, has started on a road likely to lead to prizes. Her appearance as a lawn tennis player is interesting because in another pastime, skating, she can do wonders. As a winner of the gold medal of the National Skating Association she has already appeared in these pages.

During the last few years the younger members of the golfing sisterhood have certainly distanced more experienced players. And this in spite of the fact that comparatively few girls play golf very early, since it is not a regular school game. Two years ago Miss Hezlet, double championess of Ireland and England, astonished her elders, and she and her younger sisters continue to win many coveted honours. Next came Miss Rhona Adair, as lady champion of England and Ireland

DAISY TIDSWELL.

Who has won prizes in the Archery Meetings at the Crystal Palace and the Royal Toxophilite Club this year.

Photo. Wayland.

C. M WILSON.

She has won the Kent County Cup and the Durham Cup outright, both of which she has held for three years She has also carried off the East of England Championship Cup, which is seen in the photograph here.

—and now, this year, much to the general surprise, to Miss Rhona Adair has succeeded another young lady champion, Miss M. Graham. Just lately it has seemed as though Ireland intended to monopolise the highest honours open to lady golfers. For two seasons the winner of the Irish championship, which is played for immediately before the English championship, had carried off the double honour. And when Miss Rhona Adair came over to defend her English championship after winning the Irish championship for the second time, her victory in England was very generally expected. It is, however, futile to "expect" in a golf championship that is played off by matches like an ordinary lawn tennis tournament. It may fall to the lot of one player to defeat the toughest opponents and then to meet an opponent who has not had any very hard matches to try her nerves and her endurance. Most people would consider, perhaps, that Miss Adair had had harder work than Miss Graham when the two players met in the final this year. But Miss Graham had had far less experience than Miss Adair, was far less accustomed to playing for a big honour, and in the trying presence of a big crowd of spectators. She had also had a very hard match against Mrs. Stanley Stubbs in the morning, and whether or not Miss Adair could be said to be playing in average form, it must be allowed that Miss Graham wrested the championship from her after a very cool and a very fine game. Like most good golfers, Miss Graham has played from childhood, and she has had the advantage of belonging to a golfing family. Her father and her brother are both well known golfers. Her style bears evidence of having been acquired while she was still a child, for so easy and graceful a swing must be learnt quite naturally, and all the golf coaches in the world cannot make up for later stiffness of muscle. Miss Graham does not often enter for prize competitions. One hears little of her play compared with the news to be had of most other golfers. A year will probably improve her already fine game, and it will be interesting to see whether she will succeed in upholding her title next spring. She will still be quite one of the youngest players to enter.

Archery has within the last few years brought forward two very young exponents, Miss Stella Bird, whose portrait appeared in a former article, and now, this season, Miss Daisy Tidswell. Comparatively few girls think of archery at least until they have left the schoolroom. Many make the mistake of voting it "slow," and classing it with croquet as an amusement that is not active enough. It is usually the girls who belong to an archery family and who see for themselves that it is a pastime that can afford interest during a lifetime, who know that it is anything but "slow," and who find by experience that it makes very considerable physical demands. It cannot be too often insisted on that quite one of the most pleasant features of archery is just the very fact that it does not entail running or sudden and violent exertion. In hockey or tennis or cricket you can "rush about" with companions of your own age, but in archery or croquet you can join interests with those who do not consider violent exercise either desirable or enjoyable for middle age—or for old age. Hockey companions are all very well, but most girls like occasionally to make temporary partnership with their elders. And the more this can be done on the ground of some equal interest the more satisfactory it is. It is hurtful to feel that some particular object of devotion is stooping to your level, or to what she imagines is your level. And it is so all through life, for people are not penned off with their likings immovably fixed to people who just happen to be their own age. And always someone who is older than yourself attracts your imagination, having gone through experiences that you only see vaguely in the distance. In archery, folk of all ages can meet and do meet on the equal footing of a common interest. Then, too, archery is about the only peaceful amusement that perpetual prize competitions have left, and the perpetual effort to get the better of some one else. There is, of course, competition among archers, and there are prizes—but you are not directly pitted against an antagonist. You must do well positively by shooting well yourself, and the negative effort to prevent some one else from hitting the target is absent. Certainly girls who are not at large schools and who have not a number of brothers and sisters would find archery a great resource, while many girls who are good at more active games might find it a pleasant change. They would at least very soon leave off despising it as too easy. As a rule, however, these notions do not trouble girls, unless, as we said, they belong to a family in which the pastime has been handed down like an active heirloom for generations. Then they shoot because their people shoot, and in this way keep up the old traditions of an old art. Miss Bird is the daughter of well-known archers, and so, too, is Miss Tidswell, whose father is a member of the Royal Toxophilite Club. At this club there are no lady members, but at the side of the gentlemen's targets there is a

piece of ground set aside for the ladies of the members' families and their visitors. It is a club where ladies are most royally entertained; indeed the "ladies' day at the Tox," is almost as much a red-letter day as the more serious occasion when the championship is shot for at the Grand National Meeting. A great many pleasant things go to make up this "ladies' day." It assembles shots from all parts of England — and friends from distant counties meet together. The grounds are in Regent's Park, but they are surrounded by thick shrubs and high trees, and it is difficult to believe that they are so near the heart of London. Pretty grounds, a band, the fact that everyone wears her best dress, and the lovely prizes so generously given by the hosts, are all factors in a day that is quite unique. It was at the ladies' day this season that Miss Tidswell was seen by the majority of her fellow archeresses for the first time. The week before she had shot at her first public meeting, at the Crystal Palace. And there she had done extremely well, winning the 5th score prize, and making 293 on the first day and 236 on the second day. At the ladies' day this form was very steadily kept up, and with a score of 287, Miss Tidswell became the winner of the 3rd score prize after the highest scratch score, which wins a medal. This does not mean that any handicap was given to her, but that a percentage was deducted from the score of some of the best shots who had won former rewards. The best score that Miss Tidswell has made at present is 345, and that is a very high one considering that she began just before she was seventeen, and has only shot for some nine months. Many ladies shoot for years before they "get into the three hundreds." Miss Tidswell has had, however, the advantage of coaching from her father, and although she does not belong to a regular club yet, she shot for practice nearly every day for some months, gaining facility slowly and steadily Ladies shoot first at a target sixty yards distant, and then at one fifty yards distant, and it may interest girls who think of taking up archery to hear that for sixty yards Miss Tidswell has a 28-lb. bow

Photo. C. J. Emeny, Walton.

M. B. AND PHYLLIS SQUIRE.

Who show great promise as lawn tennis players. M. B. Squire won a first prize in the Mixed Double Handicap at Felixstowe this year. Phyllis Squire is a gold medallist of the National Skating Association.

Photo. C. J. Emeny, Walton.

C. TULLOCH.

Who showed great promise in the Open Lawn Tennis Competition at Chiswick Park this season.

and for fifty yards a 25-lb bow. Some shots prefer the longer distance, and Miss Tidswell is among them. Then, too, it is a curious fact that many shots do not aim directly at the centre of the target, the gold, but aim instead at some point which they discover for themselves either above or below the target. Miss Tidswell, for instance, aims at the grass at the foot of the target. She is, too, among those who shut one eye when aiming. Some help and some coaching is advisable when beginning to shoot, but even if a girl has no friends or relations who can coach her, she will soon find that on joining a club every help will be readily offered by the members. One very pleasant feature of the archery world is this welcome and interest which is at once given to new recruits. At least one well-known shot, Mrs. Berens, has given up a great deal of time to giving help to new clubs, going into the country for the express purpose of giving her advice and encouragement.

Croquet is not unlike archery as far as its outside circumstances are concerned. It is a game usually despised by girls who only expect amusement, accompanied by running. Then, too, it shares with archery the possibility of playing with those who can no longer run violently about, and even goes beyond archery, because in croquet you might play your father or grandfather on perfectly equal terms. Miss Gower, whose portrait was given in a former article, has this season beaten all the best gentlemen players and has won the medal which has always before been played for by gentlemen alone. Comparatively few girls in the schoolroom play much croquet, however. Many play well on private lawns, but for various reasons do not enter for tournaments.

Photo. Eddy, St. Leonards.

M. BRYANT (*left*), MISS BRYANT (*right*).

M. Bryant played hockey for the South of England during last season, and was chosen to represent England in all the big matches. She is also an expert in swimming, lawn tennis, and cricket. Her sister, Miss Bryant, plays hockey for Sussex County.

The ladies' gold medal, however, was won this year by one of the youngest competitors, Miss E. Bramwell, a fact which is noticeable, just as it is that the golf championship should be won by one of the youngest competing, because in both games the majority of the players are not very young, and in both games experience counts for a great deal. Miss Bramwell has played since she was quite small, but never thought of entering at big meetings until last season, when she won a second prize in the handicap singles at Cheltenham. This year she entered at Cheltenham for the open singles and met Miss Gower in the semi-final. Against so invincible an opponent it was a fine performance on Miss Bramwell's part to lose by the narrow margin of 7 points, and after having given the lady champion a very hard game. It was no wonder that Miss Bramwell was pressed to come up to Sheen House to play for the ladies' gold medal. Here she shared with other recruits the pleasant experience of meeting with general kindness and encouragement, and contrary to all her expectations, she won the medal. Playing in tournaments, she thinks, is the best way to learn, for it is necessary to become accustomed to playing before an audience. Confidence, in her opinion, provided that a player knows the game and is a good shot, is the one invaluable possession. Until lately Miss Bramwell relied on her brilliant shooting almost entirely, but after this season's experience she has seen the value of learning to wire her opponent. Like all who have tasted the fascinations of croquet, Miss Bramwell thinks it a splendid game, though it is a game that requires a great deal of patience from its exponents. She learnt chiefly from watching others, and neither

had any coaching from friends nor studied from books.

In the skating world this year there has been no signal success gained by a girl. There is no rival to Miss Janet Tooth or to Miss Phyllis Squire. Numbers of quite tiny girls, however, skate very prettily. There are many both at Niagara and at Prince's who waltz on skates as easily as in dancing shoes, and who have made considerable progress in figure skating.

In swimming, too, Lady Constance Mackenzie, whose portrait was given last year, continues to hold the gold medal given at the Bath Club—which is the chief distinction for which ladies compete. Miss Chaplin, too, has again won the silver medal. The bronze medal was won by Lady Cynthia Needham—a little girl of only eleven.

Hockey remains the game above all others in which quite young girls shine pre-eminent. There is no doubt that some of the arguments with which we differed in the case of lawn tennis are cogent enough as regards hockey. Particularly for forward play, girls have advantages over their elders. They can run for the distance required more naturally than the majority of older women, unless they are women who have been accustomed to games from childhood. It is not surprising, therefore, that in county and in international chronicles, the names of juniors should figure so largely. To the names of great hockey players one other has been added during the past year. Last year Miss D. Pennycuick was the chief representative of hockey in a similar article. As an exponent of her place—outside left—she was, and is quite marvellous. It was destined for Miss Bryant to make her work as outside right equally famous. Both will have done a great deal not only for the teams that they have actually played for, but for very many other teams and players, and so for the game in general. It is fortunately possible now for a good player to exert this wider influence. A big match draws a big audience nowadays, and the impersonal interest that is taken in good play acts as a very efficient lever in raising the general standard. True it is, that with Miss Pennycuick, and even more in Miss Bryant's case, there is a great deal that is inimitable, that cannot be copied, and remains as an individual characteristic. Few girls, for instance, could copy Miss Bryant in her marvellous use of her stick. But there would be little harm in trying to better the command of the stick with which the average-outside right has hitherto been content. Combined with wonderful pace, this quickness and versatility in the use of her stick makes Miss Bryant one of the most tricky dribblers that have ever been seen. When out-witting a half or back she will resort to the most complicated tactics. Tiny back-hand strokes, stopping the ball dead and running back for it, are some of the means by which she will get through when ordinary straight-forward dribbling even of the neatest would not succeed. Never before was it more plainly demonstrated that in hockey brute force is not everything. Miss Bryant can hit with the best when hitting is wanted, but she also has the far rarer command of small delicate strokes with which quickness of eye and of brain can outwit an opponent. Not only in her dribbling can she serve as a means of suggesting improved methods to other players, but also in her combination with the half behind her. Granted that it requires a good half to make backward passes from forwards effective, it nevertheless needs clever play from a forward to make such combination of use. It must be just at the right time that a pass back is decided on, and never is accuracy more necessary—accuracy in the exact estimation of distance, direction, and strength.

E. BRAMWELL.
Who won the Ladies' Gold Medal in the Croquet Tournament at Sheen House this year.

It might be expected from Miss Bryant's style of play that she should be good all round at games. Nor would the supposition be wrong. As the head of a preparatory school from which boys go on to public schools or to the *Britannia*, her father encourages games of all kinds. Miss Bryant, who appears in the photo, with Miss M. Bryant, is also an enthusiastic hockey player, and plays for Sussex County. From the age of six until, at fourteen, Miss M. Bryant went to the St. Leonard's Ladies' College, she was accustomed to play

cricket, fives, and tennis with her father's pupils. Hockey, however, she did not play until she went to the Ladies' College. Even then she did not play very much, and it was by playing with the South Saxons Club and by studying the rules that she learnt the game. When still under sixteen, she played in an important match for the South Saxons against Bromley, but as a substitute, since she was not yet old enough to join the club. As soon as she was eligible she became a member, and at once played in all their matches. Her next promotion was into the Sussex county team, in 1899, and she was then chosen to play for the South and finally for England. Last season she played in all the big territorial and international matches in England. Comparing the various styles and standards of play which these matches showed her, she is of opinion that the South, taken as a whole, has the best combination and the most effective tactics.

In Mrs. Pickering, however, she thinks that the Midlands have the best back in the country. The Welsh tactics seemed faulty, since they flocked too much into their circle instead of keeping their places and trying to work the ball back when their goal was threatened. Agreeing with the general opinion, she attributes the Irish defeat to want of combination in their team. For her own club it is interesting to hear that Miss Bryant plays out-side left. Her stick weighs only about 17 oz. Those who have seen her play will have noticed that she wears football boots instead of separable pads. At her school Miss Bryant won the singles in tennis during the two years while she stayed. Two years ago she won a medal for swimming. As a cricketer she has just lately done splendidly. Playing for the Residents of Eastbourne against the Visitors, at Devonshire Park, she made 224 not out, her side scoring 360 for 5 wickets. The Visitors made 18 and 60, Miss Bryant taking 5 wickets in each innings, catching 2, and stumping 2. She has played a good deal of cricket, and her last performance gives her an average of 77 for this season. Certainly, therefore, she must be pronounced "good all round" at games, having achieved one very laudable object of ambition among girls.

RESULT OF MIXED PUZZLES COMPETITION FOR JULY.

THE EXTRA PUZZLE has enabled us to decide upon the July Mixed Puzzles Competition. WINIFRED GRACE HUDSON (18), 2, Dashwood Road, Stroud Green, takes the first prize, value One Guinea, with 174 marks. GLADYS S. JONES (20), 229, Newport Road, Cardiff, takes the second prize, value Half a Guinea, with 168 marks; and DAISY CLARK (18), 13, St. Albans Road, Harlesden, N.W., the third prize, value 5s., with 167 marks.

Answer to July Extra Puzzle.

"Ask what is Human Life? The Sage replies," *Cowper.*
A long *probation* ending in the *skies.*

"Live well; how long or short permit to heaven," *Milton.*
To *measure* Life is not to *mortals* given.

"Act well your part; there all the honour lies," *Pope.*
And *none* can *limit* him who *truly* tries.

"From labour, health; from health contentment springs,' *Beattie.*
And *love* who gives us *motives* lends us *wings.*

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast," *Pope.*
And *only* those who *hope* are *ever* blest.

"Among the faithless, faithful only he," *Milton.*
Who *faithful* keeps will *find* eternity.

"Defer not till to-morrow to be wise," *Congreve.*
For *time* is *short* and *obstacles* arise.

"He can't be wrong whose life is in the right," *Pope.*
However he may seem to *mortal* sight.

"Weak, timid landsmen on life's stormy main," *Burns.*
We *steer* for *port alas* how oft in vain.

"And grasp at life though sinking in the grave," *Falconer.*
Though we have *nought* to *lose* and *nought* to *save.*

"O welcome pure-eyed faith, white-handed hope," *Milton.*
Though *earth* may *fail,* all *heaven* is in thy scope.

"Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale." *Shakespeare.*
To those who *struggle* long without *avail.*

"But Love can hope where Reason would despair," *Lyttleton.*
And *heaven* is always *open* to a prayer.

"After Life's fitful fever he sleeps well," *Shakespeare.*
Who *passes* upwards at the *passing* bell.

Answers to the July mixed puzzles.

Acrostic—MIDSUMMER. Charade—HORSE RADISH.

SUMMER PI.

If I could dine with a Polar bear,
In a frigid, frosty dream,
I'd take a slice
Of a cake of ice,
And a snowball fried in cream.

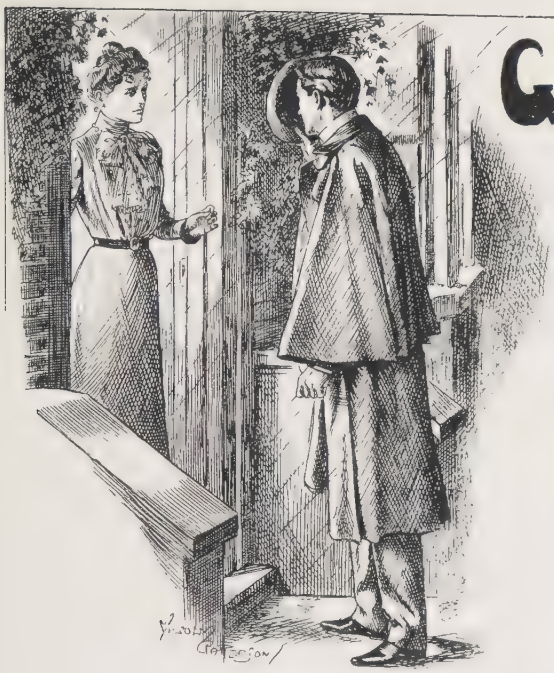
BROKEN WORDS.

1. Ram-part.	2. Her-ring.
3. Drug-gist.	4. Leg-ate.
5. Dam-ask.	6. Brace-let.
7. Court-ship.	8. Pil-lage.
9. Pa-role.	10. But-ton.

11. Mastiff.

INITIALS AND FINALS.

V a n i s H
A d a g i O
C a r t e L
A l k a l I
T u r g i D
I b e r i A
O r r e r Y
N u r s e S



GOLD-SHOT GREY

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of "Princess Vascovy," "Twixt Christmas Eve and Christmas Day," Etc.

Illustrated by MALCOLM PATTERSON.

IN TWO PARTS

PART I.

THERE was something very attractive about the young fellow as he stood there in the falling rain, with his black waterproof cloak thrown back over his shoulders, and his bowler hat tipped slightly towards the back of his head.

His clean-cut face ranged inquiringly along the row of dingy little houses, uncertain which was the one he wanted.

He looked at No. 23, and then went on to No. 33, and after looking for a moment at No. 33, he knocked at the door.

It was opened presently by a girl with a sweet oval face, whose grey eyes rested on him in surprise. At sight of her he knew that No. 33 was the house he wanted.

"I beg your pardon," he said, "Does Mr. Craigie live here?" though he knew well enough that he did.

"Yes, he does," said the girl.

"I've been sent—I've come from the office to inquire how he's getting on."

"That is very kind of you," said Grey Eyes, "he is much about the same, thank you. His cough is bad, and this weather is against him."

There did not seem to be much more to say, but he had not come all the way from Lombard Street to the wilds of Walworth to be put off with so small an interchange of courtesies as this. Besides, he came of a "pushful" race, who generally succeeded in getting what they wanted.

Grey Eyes had been to the bank about a week ago to explain about her father's illness, and young Gilbert Yorke had been greatly impressed with her gentle grace, and the sweetness and firmness of her face, although he had not had the opportunity of speaking to her himself. The report had gone round that the beautiful girl who had been admitted to the manager's room, was old Craigie's daughter, and more than one of the young gentlemen had made a mental note, that, on his return to business, it might be worth while cultivating Mr. Craigie's acquaintance more closely, with the object of thereby ultimately attaining to the acquaintance of Mr. Craigie's daughter.

And so, lest the fair vision on which his youthful eyes delighted to rest should give place to the blistered panels of the dingy front door, he smiled an engaging smile and remarked:—"I was not quite sure of your number. I knew it was either 23 or 33, but was not sure which."

"So you tried 23 first, and then came on here," said Grey Eyes.

"No, I didn't. I looked at 23, and then came on here."

Grey Eyes nodded. He really was a very pleasant looking young fellow, and they did not number many among their acquaintances. And suddenly the rain-drops shining on his hat, in the light of the street lamp, awoke in her a feeling of hospitality. "You are getting wet.

Won't you come in and shelter for a few minutes, and I will tell father of your call."

"Thank you," he said eagerly. "It *is* rather damp."

As he entered, a distinct smile rippled over the girl's face, and made it even more charming than before, like a sweep of sunlight flitting over a beautiful landscape. But her back was turned to him as she noiselessly closed the door, and he did not see the smile.

He hung up his hat on a peg and slipped out of his cloak with an apologetic murmur at its dampness, and then she opened the door of the sitting-room, from behind which he had been aware, since he entered the house, of a continuous murmur, as of someone reading aloud.

"Oh, Nell, do come along and take it from her. She goes one hundred and thirty to the minute, and mumbles at that, and we can't do over a hundred—" cried a voice, as the door opened, —and then dead silence.

He had come hoping to see Miss Craigie, and perhaps have speech of her, and here were four more of her—all charming girls, though none of them, it seemed to him at the first glance, quite so charming as—he said boldly to himself—his Miss Craigie.

However, pushful youth though he was, and conscious of his own good looks, and of several other things, he stopped short on the door mat, with something akin to confusion, as eight bright eyes in front, fixed themselves on him in surprised challenge, and he was instinctively aware from the spark of amusement which suddenly gleamed in them that there were two still brighter ones behind him.

He bowed, however, with an easy grace which, to some of them, was a surprise, and to the others was like the scent of flowers in winter, a fragrant reminder of brighter days.

"I had no intention of intruding to this extent," he said, turning to his Miss Craigie.

"We will not call it intrusion," she said brightly, "these are my sisters, Mr.——?"

"Yorke," he said hastily, "Gilbert Yorke."

"Mr. Yorke has come from the office to inquire after father. Won't you sit down, Mr. Yorke, and I will go and tell him you are here," and with a spark of mischief in the grey eyes she left him alone with the other four.

"You are all very busy," he said easily, "I'm afraid I'm interrupting you."

"It's a pleasure to be interrupted sometimes," said the eldest of the four, "we're fagging at shorthand, Phil and I, but Winnie races us off our legs." At which pointed attention to her delinquencies the youngest girl blushed furiously.

"Do you write shorthand, Mr. Yorke?" asked Phil.

"I'm sorry to say I don't, I often wish I did."

"Why don't you learn? It's not half bad, but it takes a lot of swotting."

"I'm afraid I haven't got stick enough in me. What are you learning it for?"

"To earn our livings by, when—when the time comes," said the elder girl soberly, and the others all dropped their eyes to their work, as though painful thoughts obtruded.

"Won't you introduce me in detail?" he asked, by way of diversion, "Your sister only did it *en bloc*."

"Certainly," said the elder of the shorthand students. "That little girl with the book and the red face, is Winnie Craigie. She goes to school, and as a relaxation from her lessons we permit her to read aloud to us for our shorthand practice, but she forgets, sometimes, that it is easier to read than to write. The short-sighted individual next to Winnie, spoiling her eyes over white sewing, is Miss Grace Craigie, co-housekeeper, with her eldest sister Nell, who introduced you to us wholesale, great on cooking, Scotch dishes a speciality, fair hand at plain sewing and general household mending. That basket of stockings is Nell's peculiar province. She sees to our going in that and all other respects. The militants, Philippa here, and myself, Nancy, *moi qui vous parle*, short for Agnes are exempt from household work. We are supposed to reserve all our strength for fighting our way in the world, and opening it with our pencils. We are going to be lady journalists, attend all the functions, concerts, first-nights, and that kind of thing. In addition, Phil here is artistic, black and white, so that she can illustrate what we write, strong team you see—Sisters Craigie—sounds like the music halls, doesn't it? Whole family slightly touched on music. Now you know us." All this with lively emphasis and gesticulations with the pencil, the formidable weapon which was to open the world to them, first it was a pointer, then an oyster knife, and finally a music-bâton.

"Thank you," said Yorke. He pulled a bundle of letters from his pocket, and as he looked through them said musingly, "I wonder if you—if Miss Craigie—would consider it an impertinence if I offered you some tickets for St. James's Hall next week. There's a concert there."

"Scotch Concert, St. Andrew's Day, just try us!" said Miss Nancy promptly.

"Yes, that's it. There's a man I know on the Press. He's always unloading these things on to me."

"How lovely!" said Nancy, with sparkling eyes, "Phil, my child, that's how it will be with us some day—when we get there. Imagine the joy of unloading your superfluous invitations on to comparative strangers, whereby, indeed, you may at times, entertain superlative angels unawares. How's that put, Mr. Yorke?"

"Amen!" said Philippa, clasping her hands and casting up her eyes in ecstatic anticipation, while Yorke smiled encouragingly.

"Phil, dear!" murmured Grace remonstratively.

"Nell," cried Nancy, as her sister quietly entered the room, "Mr. Yorke wants to know if you'll look upon it as an impertinence if he offers us some tickets for the Scotch Concert at St. James's Hall."

Miss Craigie's large grey eyes opened a trifle wider, and her arched brows lifted slightly, as though she thought Master Yorke had made uncommonly good use of her absence and his opportunities.

"That is very kind of you, Mr. Yorke," she said, "but will you not be depriving yourself of a pleasure?"

"Oh, he gets them in shoals from a friend on the Press," gasped Philippa, "just as Nance and I will when——"

"When we do," said Nancy. "And when we do, Mr. Yorke, we will reciprocate in kind."

"I shall remember your promise, Miss Nancy," he said, "there are three tickets here, but"—he looked up hopefully at Nell—"I can easily get a couple more if you will allow me to."

"Oh, no, pray don't think of it," said Nell hastily, "that would be presuming altogether too much on your kindness. Father begged me to thank you for calling, but he is very much afraid he won't get to town till next week. The cold has settled on his chest, and it really is not fit for him to be out. He is much distressed at the trouble his absence may be causing."

"Please tell him not to let that worry him. We can get along all right. Don't let him go out till he is quite better. I was to tell him so."

"I think another few days may put him right," she said, but there was a shadow on her bright face, for her father was more than usually depressed about himself that night. "We are doing our best for him, but the doctor says he must take the greatest care."

"Tell him not to worry, Miss Craigie, there's nothing like worry to keep one from getting well.

"Thank you very much. I'm sure he will be the better for your having called."

"I'm very glad I came," he said. "It is not always that duty and pleasure run in double harness."

He rose and bowed over her hand, and shook hands with the others.

"I'm afraid I've interrupted your work and spoiled your evening," he said to Nancy with a smile.

"I wish—" she began, and then stopped, and said, "not at all. *Dulce est*—you know. I used to teach that to a class of small boys."

"*Pro patria mori?*" he laughed.

"No—*desipere in loco.*"

"We used to translate that—'to play the fool at times!'"

"We were not so rude. We made it—'to enjoy oneself occasionally.'"

"And you won't let me assist the general enjoyment by sending you some more tickets?" he said, looking wistfully at Nell again.

"Oh, thank you, we shall enjoy those immensely," she replied, with an air of finality, and so he passed out, and she held the front door open till he accomplished the descent of the steps, and with a final "Good-night," and a lift of the hat, disappeared down the dingy street.

He walked on to the Walworth Road, hailed a hansom, and trotted away over Waterloo Bridge, and on westward.

"Who is he, Nell?" broke out Nancy, as the elder sister returned to the room, and sat down to her own peculiar province. "Isn't he just splendid? And as neat as a new pin. I'm sure he'd put on a new pair of cuffs for the occasion. I do hate a man with raw edges to his cuffs."

"There are worse things than raw edges. They are not absolutely infallible signs of character," replied Nell, with an air of matured wisdom, as she bent over her darning. "In fact, the general idea is that a certain amount of slovenliness is the natural accompaniment of genius."

"Not now-a-days, my dear. That idea is quite played out," said Nan. "Look at Millais, Leighton——."

"Paderewski, Hall Caine, Tolstoi," retorted Nell.

"Exceptions only prove rules. Even genius may be allowed its little affectations, not to say trade-marks."

"Genius should be its own trade-mark."

"Still, think of our beloved Pad without his glorious locks."

"He would still have his fingers."

"But he wouldn't make half the impression he

does now. Folks begin to thrill as soon as his friz appears on the platform. Life is none too picturesque, my dear; leave us one or two bright spots in the general grayness."

"Paddy doesn't wear raw-edged cuffs does he?" asked Winnie.

"No dear, he's got past them," said Nell. "I don't suppose any one wears them from choice."

"What does father say about him, Nell?" asked Grace, quietly.

"He says he's not been at the bank very long, but he seems a nice, steady young fellow, and anxious to learn the business and get on."

"Yes, he looks all that," said Grace, thoughtfully. "There's father's bell, I'll go and get his supper."

"And our's too, Grace. I'm famished," cried Winnie.

"All right, pet. Father first. Suppose you read some more for Nancy and Phil."

"I am not going to do another scratch," said Philippa. "I want to muse on Mr. Gilbert Yorke. Do you think he'll ever come again, Nell?"

"I shouldn't think so, child. Why should he?"

Wherein *she* was wrong.

"Of course he'll come again," said Nance. "He enjoyed himself just as much as we did. He's probably a lonely youth living in lodgings, with no society——"

Wherein *she* was wrong.

"——and at this very moment he's racking his brains to discover a motive for calling again."

Wherein she was not so very far wrong after all.

CHAPTER II.

HIS SECOND VISIT.

THE fates favoured Yorke. Mr. Craigie got worse instead of better, and Master Gilbert Yorke seemed to be the deputed messenger from the office, to bring him words of cheer and consolation, and above all explicit instructions "not to worry."

That he enjoyed the position and its pleasant duties was evident, and Nancy and Philippa, especially, made it very evident to him that on their side his visits were equally appreciated.

He was diffident about coming in on his second visit, and Nell, who answered his knock ("That's him!" said Nance, when she heard it), was equally diffident about pressing him to do so. But as he stood on the top step—it was raining again—her heart beginning to yield to his evident desire, Nance came bustling out of the sitting-room ostensibly to go into the kitchen, and catching sight of him as if by accident, came to the door.

"Why, Nell, you inhospitable wretch! Come in out of the rain, Mr. Yorke. We want to thank you for that concert. There's a peg for your coat and hat," and she hastily transferred three waterproofs to another peg. "You don't know how we enjoyed it. Were you there yourself? I thought I caught sight of you once."

"Yes I was there. First-rate concert, wasn't it? How are you, Miss Grace? And, Winnie, how are you? Where is Miss Philippa?"

"She's giving a music lesson to a small child down the street. She'll be in presently."

"I'm sorry to hear your father is no better."

"No, the weather's against him still. Anything would be better for him than this damp and mugginess. It gets on his lungs. I wish they'd let me come down and do his work for him."

"I wish they would. It would be very pleasant for all of us, a perpetual gleam of sunshine in the dingy old hole. It's a pretty gloomy interior, isn't it, Miss Craigie?"

"It did not strike me as over cheerful," said Nell, looking at him musingly—"but how do you know that I know anything about it?"

"Angel's visits are proverbially few and far between," he laughed, "but they are not forgotten even in Lombard Street."

And she pondered his answer, and wondered darkly whether——. But there—wondering and pondering could throw no light on the matter, and she gave it up.

"Here's Phil," said Nance, hastening to a sharp rat-tat at the door, and presently Phil herself came in, rosy and damp, with the rain drops sparkling in her hair.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Yorke. Horrid night, isn't it? Don't any of you begin talking till I come. I won't be a minute, but I must change these boots. They're perfectly squashy. I feel like a navvy."

She was back in a few seconds, dry shod and dusting the rain off her hair with her handkerchief.

"Now, talk away, all of you. Why, what's the matter with you all?" she asked, looking round at them.

"We were only awaiting your permission to speak," said Yorke.

"Oh, all right. I thought you were all stricken dumb. Silence in this house is x the unknown quantity. The sound of it was somewhat appalling, like the stopping of the screw on a long voyage. When x supervenes it portends something wrong."

"There is not much fear of *x* supervening while you are here, my dear!" said Nell quietly.

"Be grateful. It is our mission, mine and Nance's, to trouble the waters, and keep them from stagnating. Mr. Yorke, we enjoyed that concert superlatively. I saw you there. You seemed lonely. Why didn't you come and sit by us? We would have talked nicely to you."

"Mr. Yorke probably went to hear the music, and knew he wouldn't hear much if he sat by such a chatterbox," said Nell.

"All the same, I shall come next time, seeing that I have your permission, Miss Philippa. I was lonely, but I feared to be intrusive. By the way, that troublesome friend of mine has loaded me up with tickets for 'The Messiah,' at the Albert Hall."

Winnie clasped her hands and looked eagerly at Nell.

"One, two, three, four, five, six!" he said, dealing them out on to the table.

"Stalls!" said Phil, in an awed whisper, as she bent over to look, "and all consecutive numbers!"

"Are they?" he said, "I really hardly looked at them, but I thought, perhaps, some of you might care to go. Perhaps you have some friend you would wish to invite."

"We have," said Phil, and Nell looked at her, apprehensive of her runaway tongue. "May we invite anyone we choose, Mr. Yorke?"

"Certainly. They are yours to do what you please with."

"Then there is a young gentleman, a friend of ours, whom we would like to ask to join us—am I right, Nance?"

"You are right, my child, quite right," said Nance, briskly, as she came into the room—"I have no idea what the question is, but instinct tells me you are right. From the size of Nell's eyes it is something audacious, but I shall back you up through thick and thin. Coming from you it suggests a dash of colour in the sombre grey."

"Then in the name of the family I invite Mr. Gilbert Yorke to join us at the Albert Hall on the evening of the sixth, and to occupy stall No. 63—the middle one of the lot. Nance, stand to your colours and protect me from Nell. Her eyes are scorching me."

"Stalls!" said Nance. "We are going it! Mr. Yorke, our colours are nailed to the mast.

"IN THE NAME OF THE FAMILY I INVITE MR. GILBERT YORKE TO JOIN US AT THE ALBERT HALL."

England expects every man to do his duty. To be or not to be? If you decline our invitation we none of us go, and Winnie, there, will pine away and die. She has been worrying us for weeks to take her to 'The Messiah.' Don't decide too hastily, and weigh well the consequences—of a refusal."

Yorke's laughing eyes sought Nell's for an indication of her wishes. But Nell's eyes were busy with her work, and all he could see was the long, soft sweep of fringed lashes, casting a delicate pencilling of shadow on a slightly flushed cheek. Flung thus on his own resources, he laughed back at Nance and Phil.

"For Winnie's sake I accept with pleasure."

And Nell went steadily on with her work.

"Is father all alone, Nance?" she asked presently.

"No, Grace is with him now. She sent me in to entertain Mr. Yorke."

"He gets very low-spirited sometimes, especially towards night time," said Nell quietly to Yorke, "and we take it in turns to amuse him as well as we can."

"Could I assist him in any way—books——?"

"Oh, no, thank you, we get all we want from the Free Library. But he has his own hobbies, and we do what we can to humour them."

Nancy's lips opened to make a remark, but a warning look from Nell closed them.

Yorke had noticed the shadow on her face as soon as he entered the house, and knew that her father's illness lay heavy on her.

"Will you please assure him again," he said, and this time the glorious grey eyes had to meet his, full and straight, "that, as regards office matters, I am instructed to say that Mr. Craigie's mind is to be perfectly at rest. They appreciate him there so much that their only desire is that he should get quite better and be able to resume his position."

"That is very kind of you—or of the people at the bank," said Nell, "and I am sure it will do him good to hear it."

"Do you ever see young Lord Bereton, Mr. Yorke?" asked Philippa.

"He comes occasionally, I believe, but you can't expect a man with £40,000 a year to come grubbing round Lombard Street to any extent."

"Forty—thousand—a—year!" said Phil in a tragic whisper "My—Goodness—Gracious—Me!"

"And tons of accumulations during his minority. His father died when he was fourteen, and he comes of age on Christmas Day."

"Splendid day to come of age, and into £40,000 a year," said Nance.

"Forty—thousand—a—year!" said Phil again, "How on earth does he spend it?"

"I don't think he does spend it. I heard the fellows talking about him the other day. Report says he is a very pleasant, simple fellow, and puts on no side at all. He's just left Oxford, and is a great yachtsman."

"Forty—thousand—a—year—and a pleasant, simple fellow who puts on no side at all," said Phil once more. "That is just exactly the kind of man I would like to marry."

"So would about forty thousand other simple maidens, my child," said Nance briskly. "I'm afraid your chances are small and slim. Odds about forty million to one."

"Yes," sighed Phil, "he'll marry a princess, I suppose, and be unhappy all his life."

"Not necessarily," said Nell, "a princess is quite as capable of making him happy as anyone else."

"Even although his grandfather was only a country lawyer to begin with," said Yorke.

Here Grace came quietly in, and leaned over Nell with a whisper.

"Will you stop and have a little supper with us, Mr. Yorke?" asked the elder sister.

He started up with reddening face.

"I had no idea it was so late," he said. He looked wistfully at her for a moment and hesitated.

"We are frugal folk," she said simply. "But if you will consent to be one of the family"—something of incongruity in the expression caused her to stop and stumble—"for the time being, we shall make you very welcome."

"Then I shall be very glad to stop," he said, and sat down again contentedly.

How he enjoyed that supper, plain fare and simple though it was! Everything home-made, and everything of the best. Was there ever more fragrant coffee?—chippier oat-cake, with delicate floury bloom on top?—more fragrant scones?—crisper short-bread? Never in this world! And the memory of it all—the daintily spread table, with the long-stemmed glass of sweet-smelling narcissus in the centre, and the sweet, bright flower faces of the girls all round, the sparkling eyes, the merry babel of talk—the memory of it never left him, and as he sped westward in his cab that night he shut his eyes on the glaring uncouthnesses of the Walworth Road, and focussed his brain on the radiant brightness of the room he had just quitted, and said to himself that it was good to have been there.

CHAPTER III.

HIS THIRD VISIT.

THAT was the first time that Gilbert Yorke partook of the hospitality of the Craigie household, and he enjoyed it so much that he made up his mind that it should not be the last.

The next occasion was after the concert at the Albert Hall. They all enjoyed it greatly, little Winnie in a rapt ecstacy which was very delightful to all who were so fortunate as to notice it.

And Yorke noticed it, for he sat next to her, with Nell on the other side of him, and the two chatter-boxes as far apart as possible on the extreme flanks.

Nell had protested at being pitchforked into this position, but the decision as to places had been arrived at after most mature consideration on the part of certain lively members of the family, sitting in secret conclave and scanty attire and unbound hair on the side of their bed, a night or two before the concert came off. And when, in addition to her own desire on behalf of the common weal to keep the talkative ones as far asunder as possible, these same two resolutely put down their combined metaphorical foot, and said that they would not go at all unless she accepted their appointment of positions, Nell yielded with good grace, and enjoyed the concert exceedingly. The more, that she was quite easy in her mind at her father being left in the company of the only friend whose company he cared for, an old lawyer, named Macfie, who lived in Kennington Park Road, and whose visits —his humour coinciding with her father's— always did him good.

"Nance," said Phil, that night when they fixed the positions for the concert, as she slowly brushed out her long brown hair, "who is it Gilbert Yorke comes here to see?"

"Winnie," said Nan, holding her own brush poised for a moment, and casting a swift glance at the shining brown veil in front of her.

"No, but really and truly, Nan?"

"Well, dear, if you must know, it's me!" replied Nan with encouraging frankness.

"Oh, do you really think so, Nan? I am so glad," but her tone was not strikingly mirthful.

"Don't be a goose, Phil. It's Nell, of course. Where have your eyes been? Why I knew it the very first night he came. He saw her at the office that day she went to explain about father's illness, and he took the first chance that offered of seeing her again. He is a capital fellow, and he would kiss her shoes if she'd let him. I wonder what his position is? He would make a first-rate brother-in-law. If he had £40,000 a year, like that young Bereton, he'd be simply perfect."

"He's very nice," said Phil, brushing energetically at her hair, which hung down over her face to her waist. "You are quite sure, Nan?"

"Quite, quite sure, dear!" and then Nan proceeded to lay down the law as to the concert, but Philippa was less loquacious than usual. And if Nan were put upon oath, and had to swear that she did not feel the bed shake during the night, a little occasional convulsive shake such as might result from some one in it endeavouring with all her might, and a mouthful of pillow, to choke down a tiny sob, well, Nan, like a true sister and a tried chum, would boldly forswear herself, and say that she was so tired that she fell asleep the moment her head touched the pillow, and that she knew nothing whatever about it.

Next morning the two militants put down that combined metaphorical foot of theirs, and imposed their iron will on the other members of the family, and had their way in spite of all protests.

After the concert, Yorke, ably seconded by Nance and Phil, carried them all by sheer force of will into a first-class carriage on the Underground, and then in a cab from Westminster Bridge Station to No. 33, Camp Street, depositing them at their own door.

He had been riding outside, and in spite of his up-turned collar, looked cold and starved when he jumped down and threw open the door of the cab for them. It would have been sheer and flagrant inhospitality to let him go away in that state.

Nell hesitated to follow the dictates of her heart, but with Nance there was no hesitation.

"Hot coffee in five minutes, Mr. Yorke. Won't you come in and have a cup?"

He hesitated hungrily, and glanced at Nell.

"I am sure you are starved with the ride. We might have made room for you inside. Do come in and get warm," said Nell.

"Thank you," he said, "I would like to," and went in with them.

The front sitting room was lighted up, and at sound of the latch key in the front door, their old friend, Mr. Macfie, met them in the little hallway with his finger on his lip.

"He dozed off about eleven," he said, "and since then I have been peeping into all your books and reading all your private letters."

"Is the kettle boiling?" asked Nan in a stage whisper.

"It is," he replied in kind. "I knew I wouldn't get a cup of coffee unless it was, and I can't get such coffee anywhere else. And this——?"—he asked inquiringly, as Yorke came bounding up the steps after settling with the cabman,—"is——?" and he stopped very short and stared very hard.

"This is our friend Mr. Gilbert Yorke," said Nell,—Nancy and Phil and Grace having disappeared into the interior—"to whom we are indebted for the tickets to-night."

"Ah—I see!" said the old gentleman, still eyeing Yorke keenly. "Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Yorke. Had a good concert?"

"Splendid," said Yorke. "Foli was in great form, and Antoinette Sterling was a treat."

"Ah!" said Mr. Macfie. "You look as if you had all enjoyed yourselves."

"I don't know when I enjoyed a concert more," said Nell. And Gilbert Yorke treasured the saying in his heart.

They had another of those delightful little suppers, where everything was plain and simple, but fragrant and dainty, with a charm beyond the power of money to buy. They discussed the singers, and their rendering of the various parts, and their neighbours in the stalls, and all the thousand and one little matters in which cultivated girls, stepping back for an hour into the sphere from which they had for a time been absent, found interest and amusement.

Until, Winnie, in spite of her great enjoyment, fell asleep, and Gilbert Yorke started up in dismay, as usual, at the fleeting of the time, and bade a hasty good night, which cut short all their thanks. Old Mr. Macfie said he would walk down the street with him.

They walked together down that street, and many others, and when the old man at last wrung the young man's hand with a warm good-night the young one sprang into a cab and drove away, and the old one found his way to Kennington Park Road, so bursting with delighted chuckles that a bleary old dame at the corner of White Hart Street looked enviously after him and murmured:

"Disrepitable old reperbate! Don't I wisht I had yer chawnces."

CHAPTER IV.

HE CALLS AGAIN.

AND so the happy Christmas time drew on, with no great prospect of undue happiness for the occupants of No. 33, Camp Street.

For Mr. Craigie showed no signs of improving health, and the wearing anxiety, which darkened all these dark days for him, began to cast its shadow on Nell's sweet face too, and Gilbert Yorke saw it, and his heart ached sorely for her.

For Nell, knowing well the slender fortunes of the house, could not but look forward with foreboding to the future, even if their father's life were spared to them.

The bank in Lombard Street was not a philanthropic institution for the maintenance of sick and worn out book-keepers. It was astonishing to her that those in authority should have borne her father's absence so long without complaint, and she dreaded each day the arrival of some official communication which would sever the hair and let the sword fall. And all Gilbert Yorke's assurances that the manager's sole desire was that Mr. Craigie should keep his mind easy, and get better as soon as he could, were ineffectual in dispelling the cloud which enveloped her.

Yorke had got into the habit of dropping in once a week, nominally to inquire after the invalid, actually because he enjoyed that evening in Camp Street more than all the other six evenings put together. And the little house in Camp Street was the brighter for his visits.

He had never been admitted to Mr. Craigie's room yet.

That was by the invalid's own stringent orders. For one reason the sinking man, concerned only for those dependent on him, desired to keep from him as long as possible, and, therefore, from the authorities in Lombard Street, the fact, only too patent to himself, that his working days were numbered. Of the bitterness of his agonies in the long night watches at thought of his girls left unprotected and unprovided for, who shall tell?

His old friend, Macfie, came frequently to chat with him, and endeavoured to cheer him with assurances that the girls would find protection and provision. But Mr. Craigie looked on these assurances as simple platitudes, and drew no comfort from them.

And so it came to Gilbert Yorke's last visit before Christmas, and it fell just a week before Christmas Day.

There had been considerable discussion among the girls, and, indeed, almost a division in the family.

Nancy, Philippa, and Winnie vociferously argued in favour of asking him to join their Christmas festivities. Nell and Grace were equally wishful to extend their hospitality to one who showed his appreciation of it so keenly.

But they were fettered, the one by her doubts as to the strength of the family finances, which she dreaded having to discuss with the rest, and the other by a sudden and quite unnecessary diffidence in her own housekeeping and culinary powers, when they had to extend to turkey and sausages and plum-pudding, and a guest outside their own circle.

"After all Mr. Yorke's kindness, Nell, it is simply a shame not to give him the chance of coming and spending a cheerful day here, instead of moping all by himself in his lonely diggings. As to the turkey and trimmings, they are pretty certain, unless the firm goes back on its reputation; and as to the plum-pudding, Grace, my child, if you doubt your powers, I will accomplish one if I have to do it with the sweat of my brow," said Nan.

"You mean well, chum," said Philippa, "but it sounds nasty. If you make the plum-pudding, I think I shall not take any, if you don't mind my saying so. But really, Nell, you must decide quickly. You must ask him to-night, and he may come any minute. Here he is now. If you don't ask him, I shall. My Christmas dinner would lose all its flavour at thought of him all alone and longing to be here."

But it was not Yorke, as Nell well knew by the knock—only old Mr. Macfie.

"Mr. Macfie," cried Philippa, "you shall arbitrate between us. Bring all your legal acumen to bear upon this subject."

"I never recommend arbitration," said the old man drily. "It is almost as expensive and not nearly so satisfactory as the law. However, state your case. Mind, I shall require a fee."

"I require many things I don't get," said Philippa. "However, here is the case, and you'll have to be quick. He may be here any minute. Our friend, Gilbert Yorke, lives in lodgings all by himself, and is pretty sure to have a horrid, mopy Christmas time, unless we invite him here. I'm sure he'll jump at the chance, but Nell is afraid to ask him because and because; and Grace is afraid to ask him for the same reasons. All the rest of us want him badly. Now what do you say? Shall we ask him or shall we not? You all agree to abide by the arbitrator's decision? Now, Mr. Macfie, say yes, and I'll give you a kiss."

"Sheer bribery and corruption," chuckled the old lawyer. "I say 'yes, of course, ask him,' and if he doesn't come he'll be a bigger fool than I take him to be. Now, Miss Phil, I claim that kiss." He took it and resumed—"But for fee as arbitrator—the kiss was only purchase price of my award—for fee I claim an equal invitation with Master Yorke. Why should the young dog have all the white meat and the old one not even a bone?

"We shall be very glad of your company too, but we don't know that Mr. Yorke will want to come," said Nell.

"I should think it very unlikely," chuckled the old man, and, before they had time to say more, Gilbert Yorke's knock sounded on the door, and Philippa sped to answer it.

His face was glowing with his rapid walk over the bridge, and with perhaps something else. He greeted them all warmly, and perhaps a slight glance of understanding passed between him and the old man, as between those who share a secret.

"It is such a glorious frosty night that I

"'THIS,' SAID NELL, 'IS OUR FRIEND, MR. GILBERT YORKE.'"—(*p.* 60).

walked all the way," he said, "and you look just as cosy in here as I had been imagining you would. And how is Mr. Craigie to-night?" he asked, turning to Nell. He was always sure of the full gaze of the straight, true eyes when he asked the question, and he would have walked a hundred miles barefoot in the snow for love of the look of those great grey eyes.

"He is much as usual," replied Nell. "I think if anything this weather is better for him than the damp, but he does not improve as we would like."

"I wish you could get him down south somewhere—Bournemouth or Torquay."

"I am afraid that is out of the question," said Nell gravely, bending over her work with a slight flush.

Philippa and Nan had been on pins and needles to get broaching the great question, and now the former made a diplomatic move in that direction.

"Do you good people know it's just a week to-day to Christmas Day?"

"Heigho, how the time flies!" said old Macfie. "Christmas Day! Well, it's a lonesome kind of day for many in this great city, and it's generally been a lonesome kind of day for me, since——" what was hid behind the pause none of them knew. He went on presently.

"It has always struck me that if the lonely ones would foregather they might be less lonely. Only might be, mind you! It doesn't at all follow. They may only be just twice as lonely as they were apart. I tried it once with an old fellow something like myself. We went to the Club, and before we got through the evening, we were just about melancholy mad, and fit to cut one another's throats or our own. How do you find Christmas Day, Mr. Yorke?"

"I have spent many a lonely one. It is certainly the one day in the year that accentuates the loneliness of the lonely."

"Suppose we two join hands this year, Mr. Yorke. I have an idea you are one of the lonely ones. We will try the Club again. It is somewhat depressing on Christmas Day I'm bound to acknowledge, and the cooking is infernally bad. I think the cook makes a point of getting drunk on Christmas Day as a protest against being made to work. But we can make some punch afterwards, and smoke ourselves blind. What do you say?"

"It's certainly tempting, after your former experience," said Yorke quietly—"tempting of Providence in fact one might almost say. And it's very kind of you to think of me——"

Philippa's daintily rounded chin had dropped at the apparent desertion, not to say treason, on the part of her ally. But Nan, with keener appreciation of the position, leaped into the breach.

"I suggest that you both come here, you poor lonely things. It is not very lively perhaps, but it would be better than cutting your throats at the Club, and perhaps spoiling the Club carpets. Nell, back me up!"

Yorke glanced swiftly at Nell, and just caught the uplift of the grey eyes, and the tinge of colour on the pale cheek.

"We shall be very glad indeed if you and Mr. Yorke will join us on Christmas Day, Mr. Macfie," said Nell.

"I really believe she means it, Mr. Yorke. I have known Miss Nell since she was so high"—measuring a foot from the ground—"and I never knew her yet say a word she didn't mean. Now which shall it be—the Club or here?"

"Here," said Yorke, "and thank you very much!" But he wasn't looking in the direction of old Macfie.

The old man chuckled, and said, "Now I will go to your father and cheer him up a bit," and so left the room.

"Are you quite sure we shall not be intruding on Christmas Day, Miss Craigie?" asked Yorke, looking apprehensively at her.

"Quite sure, Mr. Yorke," and the grey eyes gave him a genuine welcome.

"It is more than kind of you," he said.

CHAPTER V.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

THE twenty-fourth of December found the little house in Camp Street humming like a hive. It was a day of hard work, strenuous endeavour, and grave anxiety, but there was something in the air, something vague and undefined, which made the coming Christmas Day seem different to every other Christmas Day, and set all their pulses bounding, and brought fresh roses to their cheeks and new lights to their eyes.

It was not simply that they were entertaining guests. The elder girls, at all events, had many pleasant recollections of the kind in the times that were past. No, there was something more than all that, though just exactly what it was not one of them could have told you. But, whatever it was, it was enough to send them on their various ways rejoicing, with music in their feet, and music in their hearts, and songs in their dancing eyes, and only none on their lips for fear of disturbing the invalid upstairs.

To and fro sped the sweet-faced workers on their multifarious duties, with scarcely time to eat, and scarcely time to speak more than an occasional flying word, except when now and again some knotty problem drew the four elders together in momentary discussion, from which they scattered here, there, and everywhere with tripping steps and flying skirts and rosy faces, weaving a spell of brightness and gladness over all the dingy little house.

From kitchen to parlour, from parlour to kitchen they sped, where Grace, the only fixed star, shone brilliant in the biggest of big white aprons, and white arms bare to the elbow, and whence at intervals all day long issued the plaintive "t-yalk-t-yalk-t-yalk-t-yalk" of suffering eggs, and the fragrant incense of nutmeg and spices;—out to the greengrocer's round the corner for bundles of laurel and branches of holly with hard, red berries which would fall off, and bunches of mistletoe with bursting white berries, which shed themselves over the carpets;—then to the grocer's for all and sundry —tiny imports of raw material from which to concoct and manufacture dreams and inspirations in the way of fancy cakes and side dishes, trifles light as air, golden custards, quivering jellies;—a few oranges and apples, chestnuts for sentimental roasting on the shovel, and almonds for more refined palates;—a packet of cigarettes for Gilbert Yorke, so that he should have no possible excuse for not smoking if he wanted to do anything of the kind.

Nan and Phil, as embryo journalists, insisted on the cigarettes, but were doubtful as to brand and quality, and diffident as to effecting the purchase themselves. They tried their best to induce Winnie to do the buying.

"Oh, but Nancy! I don't know anything about them," expostulated Winnie.

"Just walk right in and say you want some cigarettes for your brother."

"Oh, Nan——!"

"Well, he——! Well, say they're for a friend, and ask the man what he smokes himself, and if he can recommend them."

But Winnie, over sensitive and ready to dissolve into quiet tears at shortest notice if made the subject of ridicule, flatly declined to go, and as Phil's artistic temperament was expanding itself on the proper arrangement of the holly and mistletoe, Nan had perforce to go herself. She came back presently with blazing eyes and indignant protest flaming from her cheeks.

"Never ask me to go into that horrid shop

'STAND BACK, ALL OF YOU, AND SEE THE SPLINTERS FLY,' SAID NANCE."—(*p.* 64)

again, Nell Craigie," she burst out, and Nell gazed back at her in mute protest, while Phil from her precarious perch on the top step of a shoogly step-ladder, cried, "Why, Chummie mine, what's the matter?"

"I asked him for a packet of good cigarettes, and he said 'For yourself, Miss?' and I said, 'No, for a friend,' and he said, 'Gentleman or lady, Miss?' and I said, 'Gentleman, of course,' and the horrid wretch winked and said, 'I think these'll suit you, Miss, they're as mild as milk,' and I said, 'Are those what you smoke yourself?' and he said, 'God bless you no, Miss, I smokes a pipe myself. If I smoked a shop full of them twiddling things I'd want a pipe after 'em, before I'd feel as if I'd had a smoke. But they're real nice and mild, Miss, and you'll like 'em and come back for more.' So then I just picked them up and ran. Beast!"

Phil nearly fell off her ladder in her enjoyment.

But as the day wore on, and their high spirits began to wear thin with weariness, the little cloud which they had all obstinately refused to recognise began to loom larger before them.

The usual and expected hamper from the Bank had not arrived.

It had never failed before, and never had they wanted it so much as they did now.

"It'll turn up all right, Nell," said Nance, "don't worry! Don't you remember how late it was last year. Father had locked up for the night, and we were all in bed, and Phil and I came out to the top of the stairs, and he chased us back into bed. Poor old daddie, I wish he could do it now. If it doesn't come by ten o'clock Grace and I will sally forth on a foraging expedition, and do the best we can."

But though she would not have cared to confess it to the others, Nell had to own to herself that it would be much against the grain to have to spend nearly half-a-week's housekeeping money, even for the purpose of such high festival as this. Anything that ingenuity and experience and deft fingers could concoct cost them little, but the making of a turkey and sausages was beyond their powers, and the money would have to be spent.

When the clock struck ten, and there were still no signs of the hamper, Nance and Phil were inclined to express their feelings in language more expressive than polite towards those responsible for the oversight.

"I think you two had better start and see what you can do," said Nell, producing her slender purse.

Grace understood the pinch better than the others, but there was nothing else for it, so she slowly put on her hat and jacket, while Nance flung on her toque and collarette, and they set out in quest of a turkey.

They had reached the end of the street when a Carter Paterson van came lumbering slowly along towards them and turned wearily into it.

"Now, I wonder if that's our turkey," said Nance hopefully. "Grace, I believe it is!—instinct tells me it is—I'm going back to see."

"Don't be silly, Nan. I'm too tired to go back. If I once sit down I shan't be able to get up again."

"You poor little thing," said Nance, "you do look tired. Well, stand here and we'll watch. It's gone to sleep I believe. It's stopped! No, it's going on again!—No!—Come on, Grace, it's at our house," and she tore up the street with Grace toiling in the rear.

The van man had just discharged his load on to the side-walk—a box of encouraging dimensions—a great white solid cube of hopeful possibilities. Now, with exaggerated parade of its weight, he managed to get it inside the door, which stood gaping like a hungry mouth.

"Merry Krissmuss, Miss," he whispered hoarsely, wiping the honest sweat off his lips with the back of a horny hand, and patiently awaiting his reward. "Thank 'ee kindly, Miss, and a Happy Noo Ear to 'ee! Now then, wake up there, ye lazy old divvle, this ain't yer stable, consarn yer."

"Now then," cried Nance, as the tired horse was roused from its peaceful slumber, and the heavy van resumed its bountiful progression, "We'll have to unpack it here. It's a white elephant. We can't possibly move it. Phil, that hammer! Stand back all of you and see the splinters fly!"

"As quietly as you can, Nance dear," said Nell, "father is very restless to-night."

With the help of a tack lifter and the hammer, one corner of the lid was prised open sufficiently to admit the point of the kitchen poker. Nan sat on the other end of the poker, and after some wrenching and rending the five heads were bunched together over the open box, for Winnie had flatly refused to go to bed till the fate of the family was decided.

Suddenly heavy feet were heard on the steps outside.

"He's made a mistake and he's come to take it away again," gasped Phil.

A heavy double knock on the door.

"We'll defend it with our lives," said Nance, and twisted on her heel, and opened the door, poker in hand.

"Miss Craigie?" asked another wheezy voice.

"Yes," replied Nan sepulchrally.

"Barskit for you, Miss, an' Merry Christmas to you," said the man, with a doubtful glance at the poker.

"It never rains but it pours," said Nan philosophically. "Nell, dear, a handful of bawbees for Mercury."

"It do look a bit like rain, Miss, for sure," said Mercury, with a conciliatory snivel.

"There were signs of a frost——" began Nan oracularly.

"Yes, Miss, shouldn't be a bit surprised if we did have a good sharp frost——"

"But it has rained turkeys instead——"

"Bless me soul!" said the man in surprise. "Where, Miss?"

"Here," she said solemnly. "This house is full of them."

"I shouldn't try keeping 'em too long if I was you, Miss, not in this wevver. Thank you kindly, Miss, an' a Merry Christmas to ye, Miss. Don't ye keep 'em too long, Miss, or you'll have 'em go bad on your 'ands."

"Sir! the same to you and many of them."

Nan's spirits were rising to the occasion. As Mercury shambled down the steps she heard him mutter, "Blyme, if I don't think she's dotty." Then she closed the door and sat down on the hamper, and laughed till her eyes swam, at the relief from the strain which its non-arrival had put upon them all.

Then, when she had recovered, she and Phil proceeded to unpack the white elephant.

"One big turkey," announced Nan. "Here you are, Nell."

"*And* sausages—two pounds I should say," echoed Phil. "Catch, Grace!"

"Item,"—from Nan,— "big bag of oranges. Here, Win!"

"Item,"—from Phil,—"ditto apples—beauties, too."

"Item—bag nuts—enough to keep the household cracking for a month."

"Oh lovely!" from Phil, "big box Fuller's sweets."

"Item!"—calmly from Nan, "half a dozen boxes of crackers."

"Case of raisins."

"Box of figs."

"At bottom of case another case containing I should say liquid refreshments, and, stay, Nell, an envelope in the crack at the side of the smaller case. Here it is—'Miss Craigie, with Compts. and Best Wishes of the Firm.'—Hooray children!—a five pound note to buy toys for the kids, for a ducat!—They probably think we're all under ten."

Nell opened the thick prosperous-feeling envelope with trembling fingers, and then giving a little cry, groped blindly for the stairs, and finding them through her grateful tears, passed up to her room, and went in and closed the door.

"What was it?" said Phil eagerly.

"A hundred pound note!" said Nan. "Jolly old bank!" and Grace's eyes, too, swam softly in the light.

"Now, you two little ones," said Nan to Grace and Winnie, "stow away all that stuff, while Phil and I unload the hamper."

"Now, Phil, off with the lid. Told you so—turkey number two—*and* sausages—*and* apples—*and* oranges—*and* nuts—and lemons this time—this hamper is from Mr. Macfie."

"He shall have as good a bowl of punch as he knows how to make. What a queer-shaped bottle!—liqueur whiskey—also liqueur brandy. Young people, we are set up. Merry Christmas to you all! Now let us dispose of all these things, and then to bed. I'm as tired as a Carter Paterson Christmas van-horse."

To be concluded in the Christmas Number.

TWO PUZZLE COMPETITION AWARDS.

Mixed Puzzles Page Monthly Award.

(APRIL).

The First Prize, value One Guinea, falls to H. FRANKLYN (15), 18, Seymour Street, Portman Square, Hyde Park. Two Competitors tie for the second place, WINIFRED J. SPENCER (14), 47, Carlton Street, Moss Side, Manchester, and D. B. PEARSON (14), Woburn Lodge, Broughton Park, Manchester; the value of the prize will, therefore, be divided, and a prize, value 5s., will be given to each competitor. The Third Prize, value 5s., falls to MONICA LAWSON (15), Adel, Leeds. As will be seen by reference, all these names appear again in our next column. We congratulate our competitors on their double success.

Mixed Puzzles Page Quarterly Award.

(FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL.)

This Quarter it happens that the large number of marks obtained by the competitors in the months of March and April brings the same names to the front in the quarterly award. H. FRANKLYN having won the First Prize in the April Competition, is not eligible to receive a quarterly prize, or she would have taken the first. As it is, the First Prize, value One Guinea, falls to D. B. PEARSON (14), Woburn Lodge, Broughton Park, Manchester; the Second, value 10s. 6d., to WINIFRED J. SPENCER (14), 47, Carlton Street, Moss Side, Manchester; and the Third, value 5s., to MONICA LAWSON, Adel, Leeds.

GIRLS THAT THE COUNTIES ARE PROUD OF

I.—NORFOLK.

By W. H. JONES.

THE county of Norfolk has truly a famous galaxy of girls to be proud of. Wander in imagination amongst those of the past, and you may associate with royalty, with the heroines of romance and of deeds of daring, with philanthropists, novelists, writers of famous works in poetry and prose, also artists, and others, again, in whose company you may find your way into scenes which go to make up the national history of the periods in which they lived.

The present day, too, yields us many a Norfolk girl to be proud of, many who have found their way into the front ranks of the professions which they have adopted.

Photo. W. and D. Downey.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE KING (THE DUCHESS OF FIFE, PRINCESS VICTORIA, AND PRINCESS CHARLES OF DENMARK) WITH THEIR MOTHER, QUEEN ALEXANDRA,

Who, during their long residence at Sandringham, have endeared themselves to all Norfolk people.

If your inclination leads you to select, first of all, girls who have figured in romance, what more attractive young heroine can you have than the central figure of Sir Walter Scott's inimitable novel, *Kenilworth*. Amy Robsart was the child of Sir John and Lady Robsart, and was born, in 1530, at her mother's house, Stanfield Hall, in Norfolk; a house which, in much more modern times, has been associated with one of the most historic tragedies of the last century. Amy Robsart lived after her marriage, according to her letters, at Syderstone, in Norfolk, and in the church there her memory is preserved by a time-worn tablet.

Or you may have your fancy gratified by learning of the maidens of Norwich, who, during the Civil War, distinguished themselves by raising a troop for their own protection. According to a contemporary historian, these determined girls, hearing of the Cavaliers' violent outrages upon their sex wherever they got the victory, were so "sensible of their reputations" that they "readily contributed so much money as hath raised a goodly troop of horse for their defence, which is called 'the Maidens' Troop.'"

Of an even more practical character was the brave performance, during the same War, of the young Lady Alice le Strange, of Hunstanton, who accompanied her husband in his successful struggle with the troops to enter King's Lynn in order to hold the town for the King. It was said at the time that "it was as easy to get into heaven as into King's Lynn," but Lady le Strange and her husband managed it, although they were nearly ruined later for their courageous enterprise.

We have spoken of girls of Norfolk whose associations lead us into the company of crowned heads of England. Prominent amongst these is the ill-fated Anne Boleyn. Although some doubt has been cast upon the matter, persistent tradi-

ELIZABETH FRY, THE BEAUTIFUL QUAKERESS WHO BECAME THE PIONEER OF PRISON REFORM.
She was born in Norwich, and spent her girlhood at Earlham in Norfolk.

tion and the evidence of an almost contemporary writer leave little doubt of this lovely and engaging Queen of Henry VIII. having been Norfolk born. There is no doubt at all that she spent her early girlhood at Blickling, the magnificent avenues of whose park, the wealth of whose noble trees, the splendid stretches of green verdure beneath their solemn shades, all then in their prime, are still among the glories of what Bishop Hall calls the "sweet and civil county of Norfolk." The girlhood of the mother of "Good Queen Bess" is garlanded with the enchantments of poetry and romance. Hans Holbein's portrait of her is proof sufficient of her beauty.

What a difference between the marriage of Anne Boleyn with the King of England and its miserable result, and the happy weddings of royal ladies of our own day, whose girlhoods have been spent in Norfolk. Some of the girls who read this article may be able to call to mind the astonishment which prevailed in Court circles in England and abroad at the announcement that the eldest daughter of the Prince of Wales had given her hand, where her heart had been bestowed, to a subject of the Queen, and not, as might have been anticipated, to the son of some reigning monarch of a foreign country. The astonishment would not have been created if the full significance of the home life in Norfolk, which formed the beautiful character of Princess Louise of Wales, had been understood. Simple and unaffected love for those nearest to her, and the kindliest of sympathy for all around her—these are the traits of character which thrive within the family circle of our present King and Queen at Sandringham. It is only in knowing this that we can understand how, in her marriage, Princess Louise found the consummation of the romantic attachment which, formed in her early girlhood, led her to bestow on the Duke of Fife the special favour of her riper affections. The simplicity of her girlhood is still the winning characteristic of her womanhood. It finds a pretty symbolism in the fact that the only jewels which she wears are pearls; and it is demonstrated daily in the singularly domestic life which she leads. Husband, home, and children are the only necessities to

AMELIA OPIE, THE FAMOUS WRITER.
A native of Norwich, she spent much of her girlhood there.

her happiness, and so far as her limited strength permits her she devotes her leisure to taking brightness and pleasure into the homes of her humbler neighbours.

In no degree less of admiration are the King's other daughters held by their Norfolk neighbours. In them the quiet home at Sandringham has produced two Princesses who are perfectly consistent representatives of that happy home life, and closeness of family ties that are so beautifully significant of our nation at its best. The younger, Princess Maud, who has become by marriage the Princess Charles of Denmark, has always been accounted the bright and spirited girl of the family. She possesses also the simple, unaffected demeanour which has always made the Princesses so popular on the occasions of their appearance at public ceremonies. She has entered heartily into the recreations pursued by her mother, but the taste which she has most strongly developed is that for pictorial art, one of the many gifts into which the Royal Family comes by inheritance.

EMMA MARSHALL, THE WRITER SO DEAR TO GIRLS.
Mrs. Marshall was born at Northrepps, near Cromer, but much of her girlhood was spent in Norwich.

Princess Victoria, the constant and devoted companion of her mother, has had a similarly careful training, and possesses in a very marked degree those qualities of character which make for personal popularity. She finds her chief relaxation in music and in playing the piano, while there are few of the modern accomplishments which she has not acquired. But it is as the intimate friend of her parents, as the only girl at home, that we like to think of Princess Victoria, the particular favourite of the King.

But if Norfolk is proud of the girls who have, by birth or by marriage, been of the royal house of England, it has also reason to cherish the memory of girls who have won fame by their own ability, determination, and industry. It is in the domain of literature that we find our Norfolk girls most prominent figures. Among these of to-day we may take as an excellent example the Hon. Alicia Amherst, a daughter of Lord Amherst of Hackney, of Didlington Hall, whose fondness both for practical gardening and for the study of old garden literature, led her to write what has become a standard work upon the *History of Gardening in England*. Lord Amherst's several daughters are all clever, and between them they may be reckoned on to speak with authority upon, and put into practice, gardening, poultry-rearing, painting, and the writing of poems and plays, carpentry, and—shoemaking, as a despondent visitor to their home once found to his amusement and great advantage, when he discovered that a broken shoe had been packed in his portmanteau!

First among the clever girls of other days we must mention Harriet Martineau. How the incidents of girlhood are reflected in the life-work of the woman! There is a plaintive and pathetic note sounding throughout the girlhood of Harriet Martineau that pitched the key for her after life of inexhaustible activity and unvarying sympathy in the troubles of others. It produced the belief, which she expressed in *Deerbrook*, that "half the misery in our lives is owing to straining after happiness," that our duty is "to rest the care of each other's happiness upon Him whose care it is,

and to be ready to do without it;" and that "happiness is too subtle and divine a thing for our management." Life was a tremendous fact to her. It was so particularly in her girlhood.

Born in Norwich, in 1802, the daughter of a bombazine and camlet manufacturer, of a line of French Huguenots, who had migrated to Norwich many years previously, she was a puny, delicate child. Bad nursing, and a busy mother's inattention, had done much to weaken her constitution, and depression and nervous terrors haunted her early years. We are told how, to her "the dim light of the windows in the night seemed to advance till it pressed upon her eye-balls; the starlight seemed always coming down to crush and stifle her; and she could not even cross the yard to the garden without flying and panting, and fearing to look behind, because she thought a wild beast was behind her." And yet the child had a natural philosophy all her own. When only two or three she would say "Never cry for trifles!" Maxims and trite sayings were an early delight to her, and one of her childish pleasures was the copying into a book of all her favourite maxims. In after years she would recall days in childhood spent in weeping, praying, and *writing sermons*—and in awe of her mother, too, who apparently she did not understand, and who seldom won her childish confidence. But one day, when a fly got into her eye, her mother said "Harriet, I know that you have resolution, and you must stand still till I take it out."

These were the first encouraging words she could remember. Her treatment by the rest of the family circle did much to make her harsh and relentless, silent and reserved. The great calamity of deafness, too, fell gradually upon her, and increased the difficulty of her girlish position. She had a relative who was deaf, and she had been used to hear her family say, as the afflicted one approached the house, "What *shall* we do? We shall be as hoarse as ravens all day;" and to herself Harriet would say "Shall *I* be dreaded and disliked in that way all my life?" It gradually came about that her great delight was found in reading. A school, in Norwich, kept by a Unitarian minister, yielded her earliest education, but at home she devoured Shakespeare, and would find recreation in gleaning information from the newspapers about Political Economy, the National Debt, the Funds, and similar subjects that are foreign to most girls, but which guided her thoughts into the channel whence flowed, in later days, the great works which made her famous, and which lend to her name a significance and reputation that will long survive.

At sixteen she was sent to her aunt's school at Bristol, and here her new companionships warmed her heart and expanded her nature under more genial influences, so that on her return to Norwich she was less morbid and despondent, and a more cordial feeling sprang up towards her mother. She helped in the household duties, engaged in fancy work, and pursued her studies in a more unselfish manner. Composition now en

Photo. Maull & Fox, Piccadilly

MRS. EVELYN CECIL (THE HON. ALICIA AMHERST), WHOSE "HISTORY OF GARDENING IN ENGLAND" IS A STANDARD WORK.

Norfolk has a just right to be proud of her, for much of her life, before her marriage, was spent at Didlington Hall, the Norfolk residence of her father, Lord Amherst of Hackney.

gaged her efforts, and at nineteen she was delighted to have an anonymous contribution of hers accepted and printed in the Unitarian periodical which her parents took in. "I went home," she wrote, recalling this incident, "in a sort of dream, so that the squares of the pavement seemed to float before my eyes. That evening made me an authoress."

Troubles came shortly afterwards. Business languished, the anxiety killed Mr. Martineau; Harriet became engaged—her lover died insane; to forget all she had recourse to her pen, and with it made a modest income by writing short stories for a Calvinist publisher. Still the financial troubles of the family increased, and whilst her sisters went out to earn money in other directions, Harriet's deafness kept her at home, and she relates how at one time funds were so low that she found herself without money enough to pay the postage of a thirteenpenny letter. Trouble, however, only nerved her to work; with her needle she supplemented what she earned by writing. Whilst at home at Norwich, she entered the list of competitors for the prizes of £10, £15, and £20, offered for the three best essays expounding Unitarianism to Catholics, Jews, and Mahometans. To her intense, but glad surprise, she won all three prizes, and with the proceeds she went to Dublin to her brother. There she planned her tales to illustrate different points of Political Economy. It was thus she entered upon the career which was to mark her as a woman of strong will, vigorous brain, great personal influence, and much nobility of character—as a useful practical writer, a notable journalist, full of shrewd common sense—and as the author of *Deerbrook*, *The Crofton Boys*, and *Settlers at Home*.

Another figure standing out prominently amongst those of Norfolk girls who have earned distinction in the field of literature is Amelia Opie, whose girlhood, however, was markedly different in its surroundings from that of Harriet Martineau. As her womanhood was, so her early years were, bright and happy, and her whole career was useful and conducive to happiness in others. A native of Norwich, she was born in 1769. Her father, a famous Dr. Alderson, is said to have always prescribed for the poor without fee. In such a household, amid its generous influences, Amelia grew up and entered early into all the delights of the brilliant literary and professional society of Norwich of the end of the eighteenth century. Her childhood was regulated with severe discipline. She remembered her mother (who died when Amelia was fifteen), giving her a skeleton to play with, from her father's study, because she had a girlish fear of skeletons; and making her hold beetles in her hand until she had lost her terror of them. There can be no doubt that the stern discipline to which her girlish mind had been subjected helped to strengthen that beneficent and philanthropic disposition which was so prominent a characteristic of her mature years. Her education was well calculated to develop her natural gifts. She learned languages from a minister of the French and Dutch churches in Norwich. Perhaps her favourite lessons were those that she received in dancing from a master named "Christian," by whom the youth of Norwich were taught the mysteries of the minuet, gavotte, and contredanse. In after years, when she was a famous authoress and the wife of a great painter, she visited the Hall in Norwich, then used as the Dutch Church, and while her husband was explaining to a friend the details of the architecture around them, Amelia, in her natural gaiety, danced a *pas seul* on the floor, but was brought quickly to a standstill by a sudden recognition of the fact that engraved on the stone upon which she had been dancing was the name "Christian," and that beneath her twinkling feet reposed the listless limbs of her dead dancing master.

During the later days of her girlhood she devoted herself to her father, making up to the best of her ability, by the brightness of her disposition and her intelligent conversation, the void in his life that the death of her mother had created. It was an eloquent testimony of her love for him, that when she married, in 1798, her chief inducement to do so was a promise extracted from Opie, her betrothed, that he would never separate her from her father. She was a perfect musician, and sang with sweetness and power such popular songs as "Sally in our Alley." It was doubtless the fame of her early triumphs that led to the remarkable sensation which she created in the open Boulevards of Paris, in later years, by singing "Fall, Tyrants, Fall!"

With all her accomplishments it is no wonder that as a girl Amelia was most popular and in great social request. Still she was not spoilt, and her husband, John Opie, the Cornish painter, eight years her senior, who had been obliged to divorce his first wife, found in his second as good a partner as his first had been bad. The union was a particularly happy one. "If I would stay at home for ever," she once wrote to a friend, "I believe my husband would be merry from morning till night—a lover more than a husband." It

Photo, Elliott & Fry.

MRS. HELEN TRUST, THE FAMOUS SINGER.

She was born in Norwich, and lived there throughout her girlhood.

contributed a prominent figure in Mrs. Emma Marshall, who succeeded in gaining a proud position as a story writer against odds that would have daunted and broken the heart of a woman with less determination and moral fibre. Born at Northrepps, near Cromer, her childhood was passed, in Norwich mostly, in company of brothers and sisters much older than herself. Her daughter, in a recently-published biography, says that Emma Martin, for that was her maiden name, "grew into a lovely little girl, with eyes as blue as the bluebells in the Northrepps woods, silky light hair, cropped short according to the fashion for little Quaker girls, and a skin exquisitely fair." As a girl she was bright and lively, full of zest and energy and glowing health, carrying sunshine wherever she went, having been nurtured in a home of scrupulous dainty refinement, and simple Quaker elegance.

MISS A. P. BARWELL,
The girl golfer of whom Norfolk is justly proud.

was moving about in society, however, that she gained, by her habits of observing people and manners, the experience which, in her novels, she communicated to others. In her better known stories, such as *Father and Daughter*—a subject which she could not fail to treat of with advantage to her readers — *Temper*, *Illustrations of Lying*, and others, her object was to portray domestic life, and in such a manner as to indicate its dangers and temptations.

Thus we have seen that two of the girls of whom Norfolk is rightly proud, Amelia Opie and Harriet Martineau, each in her different method and sphere, took up for her theme the prevailing forms of social shortcoming, of moral evil or political error, and while lighting their dark corners they pointed out the remedy.

In the rank of modern authors, Norfolk has also

MISS MARY NOVERRE, A NORWICH GIRL, AND PROMISING YOUNG VIOLINIST.

With the removal of her widowed mother and herself to Clifton, social relaxation became more indulged in, she was allowed to make girl friends and enjoy frequent intercourse with others. Her sympathies were enlarged, conversational powers cultivated, and letter-writing more freely practised; and this latter circumstance proved, even then, her possession of a facile pen. In course of time she, with her mother, was baptised into the Church of England, by a vicar, the Rev. James Marshall, of Clifton, whose acquaintance was quickly fostered, and into whose family Emma married by uniting with his son, a clerk in the ill-fated West of England Bank. Upon the disastrous closing of the Bank in later years, Mrs. Marshall heroically set herself to maintain her large family by the employment of her pen.

The sharp adversity with which she steadfastly combated proved the natural and conspicuous ability which characterised all her works. Her labour was one of delight, but it was stern and exacting labour, often keeping her to her task far into the night, often into the small hours of the morning, working "at the point of the bayonet," as she herself would sometimes express it. She had always shown a facility for story-writing, but when sheer necessity urged her on, her works were of a more important order. She delighted us with some of the most instructive and imaginative pictures of the England of other days, and all her stories possessed a charm and feeling that were irresistible. Such stories as *Under the Dome of St. Paul*, *In the Choir of Westminster Abbey*, *Kensington Palace in the Days of Queen Mary II.*, *Under Salisbury Spire*, and many others of like character are familiar, and will long remain amongst the most popular of their class. Mrs Marshall wrote many of her best books upon subjects connected with her native county. *In the East Country with Sir Thomas Browne Knight*, was one of her most successful stories, and *Castle Meadow* treats of Norwich in the days of "Old Crome," the Artist; both bear frequent evidence of a great fondness in the writer for the city of her girlhood. But all her works were eloquent testimony of the great purpose of her life—a purpose which finds fitting expression in the inscription placed upon a memorial brass erected, after her death in 1899, in Bristol Cathedral—"A lover of good men, and herself a follower of their faith and patience, she strove by her writings to make others love them."

Before devoting our attention to another, and the last we name, of the prominent girls of former days, we may mention a few musical girls of to-day, who are taking their stations in prominent places. And here we may parenthetically remark that it is to a Norfolk girl, Elizabeth Glover, that we owe the first conception of the idea of the Tonic Sol-fa method of musical notation; it was to her suggestion of the system that John Curwen owed the foundation of that method of teaching music with which his name will ever be associated.

But Norfolk has produced many a good singer, and we are proud to find in one of the most prominent vocalists of the day, Madame Helen Trust, a Norwich girl. As Helen Stark, she comes of a family who in an earlier generation gave us a famous painter of the Norwich school. In her girlish days she showed a peculiar aptitude for musical and vocal studies, and she was fortunate in having these studies guided by competent instructors. She is still remembered as one of the chorus of the Norwich Festival, and it can be imagined how proud her old companions of those days were, when, after a considerable period devoted to teaching others in London, her own steps were guided to the ranks of public singers, and she became engaged as a principal for the Norwich Festival of 1893, in company with others of the most notable vocalists of the day, including Madame Albani, Edward Lloyd, and Ben Davies.

Another girl of Norfolk who is rapidly climbing to distinction in musical circles is Miss Mary Noverre, whose name indicates a Norwich family who have long been associated with musical progress in the city. Miss Mary Noverre has profited well by her opportunities, and having won the Norfolk Scholarship at the Royal College of Music, some seven years ago, for violin playing, has since earned the special distinction of two extensions of the scholarship, and, later, won the Dove prize for general proficiency. She has already become one of the principal of our present-day women-violinists, and holds the position of sub-professor on the staff of the R.C.M.

Another notable girl who, however, has devoted herself to a different pursuit is Miss Marion Barwell, of Norwich, who has made her name exceedingly popular in her native country, and in a much wider sphere, by volunteering to proceed to South Africa as a nurse attached to the Army Hospital. Her services were accepted, and she was given a commission with rank as lieutenant. She has since returned home invalided, but, having regained her strength, she is again at the seat of war.

It is but a short step from such devotion to the needs of others as that displayed by Miss Barwell that takes us to the consideration of the

great philanthropic work of another of our Norfolk girls, this time one of other days. This is the beautiful Quakeress, Mrs. Elizabeth Fry, or Elizabeth Gurney as she was born, who became one of the most conspicuous women of her time, and whose work will never be forgotten. Her girlhood was spent at Earlham, in Norfolk, although she was born in Norwich. She enjoyed a fond mother's devoted care until twelve years of age, amid the most charming influences. The mother's own rules for the management of her household indicate the singular happiness of her ideas for fostering the mutual love of her children:—"Before tea, or immediately after, I should assemble the little ones, to take particular and individual leave of each other." In one of her letters, the mother speaks of little Elizabeth —"My dove-like Betsy scarcely ever offends, and is, in every sense of the word, truly engaging." The family of Gurneys were Quakers, and the young members attended with their parents the meetings of the sect. As a girl Betsy was not studious, and her aversion to learning was a serious disadvantage to her, for it left her education imperfect and defective. In some matters she was naturally obstinate, and this, the only failing in the child, became ultimately that finely-tempered decisiveness and firmness which enabled her to execute her difficult projects for the good of others. As a child she was most impressionable, and she once related how she was so much struck with horror at reading of the sacrifice of Isaac that she always dreaded going to meeting lest her parents should sacrifice her there!

Her girl life, however, was not allowed to be overclouded by an excess of religious exercises, for the family at Earlham led anything but a restrained life. We read of dancing being almost a part of the daily round, although by Elizabeth it was not so freely indulged. A sister's diary says: "Betsy went to the Assembly last night, and danced a great deal. How most droll! quite a new excursion!" This was when she was seventeen, but what taste she might have developed for this and similar recreations was not by any means permanent; for in the following year the sister's diary says: "I have felt extremely uncomfortable about Betsy's Quakerism, which I saw, to my sorrow, increasing every day. She no longer joined in our pleasant dances, and singing she seemed to give up; she dressed as plain as she could, and spoke still more so. . . She is industrious, charitable to the poor, kind and attentive to all of us; in short, if it was not for that serious manner which Quakerism throws over a person, Betsy would indeed be a most improved character."

Circumstances, however, conspired to confirm Elizabeth Fry in her religious pursuits. A powerful preacher, whom she had heard at the Meeting in Norwich, when she was twenty, aroused unexpectedly the utmost fervour in her. She had, with maidenly pride, put on a pair of new purple boots, laced with scarlet, with which she intended to console herself if oppressed with the dulness of the Meeting. But she became much agitated, her attention being powerfully arrested. Next morning the preacher breakfasted at her home, preached afterwards to the sisters, and spoke particularly of Elizabeth, "prophesying a high and important calling into which she would be led."

From that day her love of pleasure and the world seemed gone. The Bible became her study, visiting the poor, especially the sick, her great object. Her sisters recognised in the change the dedication of her life to a most important service. They were astonished more than at anything else by Elizabeth's request to her father that she might visit London and examine for herself all the fascinations and amusements of the world. She was allowed to go, and as she put it herself, "tasted London." But she came home determined to pursue a rigid course of religion. She announced to her family that she must become "a plain Quaker." During the period in which her mind was thus being modelled for the great career of her womanhood, she met, at her home, John Fry, a schoolfellow of one of her brothers, who lost his heart to her, and eventually, after much opposition, won her for his wife. Her name is indeliby written among those of the pioneers of prison reform.

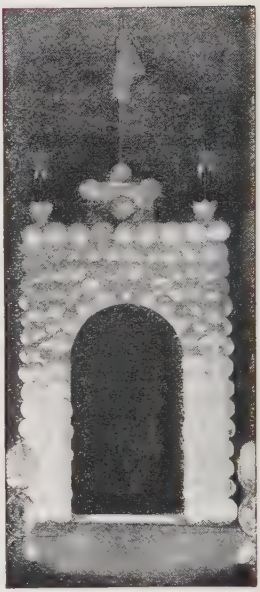
The last example to be given of the girls of Norfolk of whom we are proud, is Miss A. P. Barwell, sister of the Nurse Barwell of whom we have spoken. She has been honorary secretary of the Royal Norwich Ladies' Golf Club since 1896. The record of the men's 18-hole course is held by Miss Barwell with 97, a score which secured for her the Open Scratch Challenge Cup in June, 1899. She has also won the Gold Scratch Badge of Great Yarmouth, for a score within one of the previous records of the links: the Norfolk County Cup, played for at Fakenham every six months; the bronze medal of the Ladies' Open Championship when it was played in Yarmouth in 1898; and in the same year she won the Ladies' Golf Union gold medal.

A Winter Evening's Fun With Egg-shells

BY

MEREDITH NUGENT.

Enchanting possibilities that have remained hitherto undiscovered in a familiar household favourite.



A TRIUMPHAL ARCH.

What a world of indignity has been heaped upon the delicate egg-shell! It has been painted, stained, hidden under monstrosities of ribbon, and burdened with abuses as hideous as endless, as though everybody were in league to smother its beautiful lines under the dreary commonplaces of worse than poor taste.

Yet if one but knew, it is material from which the loveliest objects may be made. Dainty candlesticks, exquisite fairy lamps, purest of night lilies and perfect dog-wood blossoms may be fashioned from it with surprising ease. It may be made into funny egg-shell roosters, snowy white swans, glorious triumphal arches, the most dainty yachts imaginable, besides a whole host of other objects fully as marvellous and quite as interesting.

Big boys, little boys, rich boys, poor boys, can all make the beautiful yacht, or give vent to their patriotism in the erection of a brilliant patriotic arch. For the girls, nothing could be more interesting than the "blossoming egg-shells." The one illustrated was made from fragments of egg-shells taken haphazard from the breakfast-table, and fastened to a twig with sealing wax. At a distance of six feet from the spectator these shell blossoms actually looked like real ones, so perfect was the illusion.

The objects here illustrated are not the results of any extraordinarily patient work, nor of any special talent, but are such as may easily be made by any person who carefully studies the models and follows the directions.

To make the blossoming egg-shells, place upon a slender branch a drop of melted sealing-wax, and before this hardens stick in your fragments of egg-shell so as to form a flower. Keep on doing this until the branch is well stocked with blossoms. Fragments of egg-shell do not require cutting; those taken at random from the breakfast table serve admirably. In placing blossoms in position it is well to follow the arrangement shown in the illustration.

Night lilies may be made by first soaking a number of half shells in warm water for twenty minutes. Then scallop the edges of these with a pair of sharp scissors. Fasten a small piece of candle in each with sealing wax, and float upon the water. A most enchanting scene is produced by floating these in an aquarium containing goldfish. All other lights in the room must be turned out.

To make the candlestick, place upon a piece of cardboard three eggs, and fasten to cardboard and to each other with sealing wax. On top of these three fasten another egg, and on this again a stick about five inches in height. Upon the top of this stick fasten a "half-shell" which has been previously scalloped, and place in a dainty candle. The illustration shows exactly how the candlestick looks after it is made.

THE RACE FOR THE EGG-CUP.

To make the egg-shell rooster, fasten two pieces of a match to an egg, about three-quarters of an inch apart. Set the egg in position on these, and hold in place, while fastening lower ends of matches with sealing wax to a firm base. Attach two large pieces of ragged shell to the egg for wings; use a slender piece of tallow, taken from the side of a candle, for the neck; and on top of this place a small chunky lump of the same material for a head. The pieces of tallow may be easily joined together by first slightly melting the ends where adherence is desired. The rooster's bill is made of two small ragments of shell stuck into the tallow head. The eyes are two tiny drops of sealing wax. The comb is a piece of flattened sealing wax, and the tail is a ragged piece of egg-shell. The feet may be made of sealing wax drawn into shape while it is still soft.

AN EGG-SHELL CANDLESTICK.

An egg-shell and candle-grease swan may be made by emptying an egg and sealing it up carefully.

Then fasten on wings of ragged egg-shell, tail of an odd-shaped piece of tallow and neck and head of tallow.

For the bill thrust into the head two burnt matches; press in two pieces of tallow for eyes, and fasten a coin for ballast to the bottom of the egg with sealing wax.

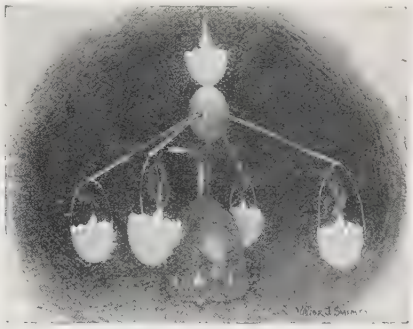
To make an egg yacht, first empty an uncooked hen's egg. Do this by making a small hole in each end, when the contents may be blown out easily. Then close up both openings with sealing wax: join a number of coins together for the keel, fasten this firmly to the egg—all fastenings to be made with sealing wax—and your yacht is ready for launching. If it floats properly cut out the mast and spars from very light wood: fasten these to hull and to each other with sealing wax. Place the delicate wooden rudder and bowsprit in position, and proceed to make sails of tissue paper. Fasten the main and top sails in place with prepared glue—the jib sails first to long pieces of thread, and these, in turn, to mast and bowsprit. Flags and pennants may be made to adhere with mucilage or glue. The exact dimensions of mast and spars cannot be given, as so much depends upon the lightness of the material used and the size of the egg hull. Select as large an egg as can be procured for the hull; make the mast and spars as light as possible, and see that your yacht always sets perfectly even upon the surface of the water.

EGG-SHELL ROOSTER.

To make the revolving fairy lamps, fasten to an emptied egg four slender sticks, each four inches in length. Upon the lower end of the egg fasten a tack, point downward, with sealing wax From the tip of each stick suspend with delicate wire a scalloped "half-shell," and on top of the egg place another. Set the whole upon the bottom of an inverted tumbler. If rightly made it will balance perfectly upon the tack-point. Place pieces of candle inside of scalloped shells and light. Wire may be fastened to the egg-shells by boring a hole with the point of a penknife and then passing through wire, and fastening on the inside.

A WHITE SWAN.

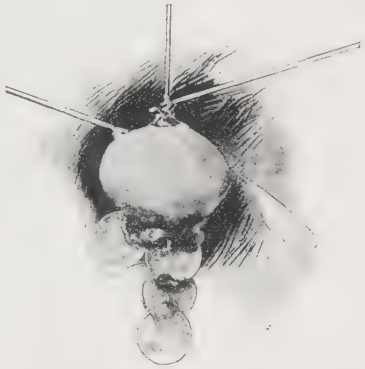
The triumphal arch may be made by taking the cover of a stout pasteboard box and cutting out a piece in the centre to form the arch. Then with tacks firmly fasten the cover in upright position to a piece of board. Previous to doing this have ready a lot of ends of egg-shells and attach these with sealing wax to the cover, as shown in the illustration. When the face of the arch is completed fasten on top a small pasteboard box, and to this fasten egg-shells. Upon the corners of the arch place two upright egg-shells. Upon the top of the small box place half an egg-shell, and upon the top of this again fasten a light flagpole with flag. For the lamps take two half egg-shells and fasten them in position on the board about six inches in front of the arch. Upon the top of these half-shells place whole eggs, and upon the top of



EXQUISITE FAIRY LAMPS.

these half-shells. Into each of these half-shells place a small piece of lighted candle, and inverted over this another half-shell. Cut the last half-shells jaggedly so as to let air in for the candles.

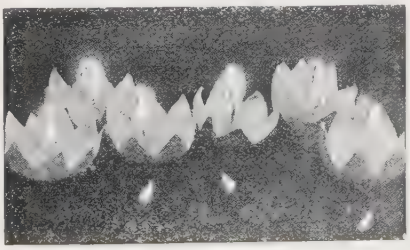
By painting the board black, and turning out all other lights in



HOW THE HULL OF A YACHT IS MADE IN EGG-SHELL.

the room a marvellous effect is produced with the arch lit by fairy lamps.

Make all the fastenings with red sealing wax, as it adds to the effect. Where candles are to be used turn out all the lights.



PUREST OF NIGHT LILIES.

This is the first of a series of entrancing articles on games that the Editor has arranged to appear in "The Girl's Realm."

What Girls are Doing.

MDLLE. PIÉRAT,

A young French girl of 16 who has received the highest honours of the Paris Conservatoire.

DOROTHY CREEDE,

Who will inherit £600,000 when she is 25, if she has led "a proper and virtuous life."

MISS TRAVERS,

A young English girl who has been awarded the Medal of the Royal Humane Society for saving a lady from drowning at Madeira.

I HAVE to record an act where everything depended on a girl's impulse for the moment, where the moment's impulse was all for another with nothing in it of self or fearsomeness, and with the saving of a life as a result. Away in the bright island of Madeira at about seven o'clock in the morning of the 14th of February, two ladies were bathing in a pool below the promontory on which the new hotel stands. This bathing pool is protected from the full force of the sea by a ledge of rock which acts as a partial breakwater. The waves on that morning, however, being high, rushed the ledge, and a roller more huge than the others carried one of the bathers over the protecting wall of rock into thirty feet of water. Her companion being unable to swim, raised an alarm, and Miss Travers, a young English girl, who was sleeping in a room overlooking the bathing pool, heard. In an instant, she was on the steps in her nightdress, sped to the sea and leaped in. She swam till she reached the drowning girl, who had risen to the surface, held her in such a way that both were kept afloat until a boat was brought to the spot, when they were taken safely on board. The Royal Humane Society presented Miss Travers with a bronze medal in recognition of her brave and timely act, and the tribute of all girls goes out to one who so fearlessly risked her own life to save that of another.

* * * *

Fame comes slowly to most people, but to Mlle. Piérat, at the Conservatoire, in Paris, it came in the raising of an eyelid. Picture a low room in the National Academy of Lyric and Dramatic Art, one day in August. On a raised platform in front of a small stage is seated a jury of some of the most famous men in Paris. Great dramatic authors, composers, directors of opera, managers of theatres; they are there to hear the twenty to thirty picked graduates of the Conservatoire who have been chosen to compete for the cherished yearly prizes awarded to the best in each section of lyric and dramatic art. The candidates perform scenes from various plays and operas. It is no light matter to make one's *début* before

such an illustrious jury. The male and female classes in tragedy were left unrewarded by anything beyond second prizes, since no one was found worthy of firsts. Then, it is recorded, the candidates were all more or less discouraged—the jury of famous men very wearied, till the competition for comedy was announced, when a young girl, fresh, blue-eyed, and fair-haired, attired in white muslin, and not at all affected by the prevailing depression, appeared. She began to recite a scene from "Le mariage de Victorine." Her clear voice and her fresh young presence caused an immediate sensation. Everybody became alert and very much nterested. She finished her oration to a burst of genuine applause.

"We have at last found something extraordinary," said the jury. Mlle. Piérat was forthwith awarded the highest honours, despite the fact that she had studied for only one year at the Conservatoire, the custom being to reserve the prize for a student who completes the two years' course. No first year pupil has had that honour since 1869, when the first prize was conferred on Mlle. Croizette, who was then a one-year pupil. Mlle. Piérat is only sixteen years of age, but has the bearing and courage of twenty. On her own responsibility she passed her entrance examination to the Conservatoire, and the outcome of her splendid first appearance before the Parisian critics has been her immediate engagement at the Odéon Theatre.

* * * * *

While we wonder and plan, and think of the various ways in which the girls of to-day may find remunerative employment, the needs of the day often provide very unexpected solutions. There is a certain pretty seaside resort in England, named St. Anne's-on-the-Sea where the holiday people play golf. The result is that all the boys in the place and some of the girls are used up as caddies. It is a paying and healthy profession. But it robs more necessary occupations of some indispensable boys. Shopkeepers cannot find errand boys, and what is still more serious, telegraph boys have become very scarce indeed. So the post-master of St. Anne's-on-the-Sea, Mr. Laycock, has hit on the happy plan of engaging telegraph girls, for which plan he received permission at head-quarters. Since November last the plan has worked admirably. Five girls are now employed, their ages varying from thirteen to sixteen. They wear no distinctive uniform, beyond a small badge on the left arm. The messages are carried in a pouch attached to a belt. The girls have one bicycle at their disposal. The gratifying part of the scheme lies in the fact that Mr. Laycock finds that these girls do their work much better than boys, and do not waste time by dawdling This is proved by the result that though the girls are paid at the same rate as the boys, they get through more messages and actually earn more wages. In North Berwick, in Scotland, for the same reasons of golf, two girl telegraph messengers are employed out of a staff of five.

ST. ANNE'S-ON-SEA EMPLOYS GIRL TELEGRAPH MESSENGERS, AND FINDS THEM MUCH MORE RELIABLE THAN BOYS.

* * *

Real fairy tales are supposed to be quite out of fashion in the present day. And yet one small girl, aged five, who lives in California, America, may some day have reason to doubt that fact. A kind or mistaken fairy—it has yet to be discovered which—in the shape of a lonely old man with an immense fortune, has left the enormous sum of £600,000 to a little girl, Dorothy Creede, to be given to her when she is twenty-five years old, "if she has led a proper and virtuous life." How like the old unreal tales it reads, and what pictures of beautiful things and splendid opportunities £600,000 suggests to all of us. The old man used to watch the pretty child over his garden wall. He grew to love her, until he loved her better than anything else left to him in the world. And so he adopted her, and at his death left his money to her on that one condition. Everyone is anxious to know whether or not Dorothy will subscribe to it. As a child, I fancy her three million dollars will seem a very small thing indeed. Everything to a child is small except the one special thing it wants just at the moment. We can imagine what a vague sort of threat, "Now be good, or you won't have three million dollars when you grow up," would have been to anyone of us when we were children; how Dorothy, perhaps, may look upon it all as the worst kind of "bogey man," until she grows up to appreciate it. What great good, too, may come of all that money when it reaches the hands of the virtuous woman, as we conclude it shall when Miss Dorothy Creede is twenty-five.

THE GIRL'S REALM MIXED PUZZLES PAGE.

THIS month we offer Books to the value of ONE GUINEA, HALF-A-GUINEA, and FIVE SHILLINGS respectively, for the first, second and third sets of answers in order of merit to the puzzles given on this page, *the books to be selected by the winners themselves.* We also continue a quarterly series, which will conclude in our October number.

Quarterly prizes of the same number and value will be given to those who gain the first, second, and third highest number of marks in the quarter (August, September and October), those obtained by First Prize winners in the monthly competitions alone excepted.

* * * * *

Riddle.

My *first* and *second* are in cap,
My *third* and *fourth's* a city,
My *whole* is what we show, sad hap,
Who can't be wise or witty.

Five Marks.

* * * * *

Anagram.

Flora must rest some, eh?

The violets and daffodils have withered long ago,
And the apple-bossoms bloom'd and fell, a drift of scented snow,
But tho' the Autumn grasshopper chirps out his sleepy tune,
I linger yet a little while to make you think of June.

Ten Marks.

* * * * *

Ladder Puzzle.

The sides of the ladder are formed by the names of well-known American poets. Each name contains nineteen letters. Each one of the nine rounds contains four letters.

Rounds of the Ladder.

1. A false god.
2. Sixty-four.
3. Ancient name of Saône.
4. A walking stick.
5. Praise.
6. Wrong.
7. A Hebrew measure.
8. A small boat.
9. Not any.

Diagram.

Twenty Marks.

Riddle in Rhyme Competition.

For the best riddle and answer in rhyme,

Twenty-five Marks.

(The riddle need not be original, but the rhyme must).

Competitors to state whether the riddle is original or not.

* * * * *

Historical Puzzle.

'Twas writ by one who ruled, yet king was not,
And read by one whose mood was fiery hot.
Through it from all his pomp the writer fell,
And to his power bade a sad farewell.

Ten Marks.

Proverb Puzzle.

My 4, 13, 9, 14, floats,
But not too fast—it isn't boats.
My 27, 18, 3,
The nickname of a friend may be.
My 22, 10, 1 will thrive,
And increase much + 25.
My 20 and my 23,
In exclamation do agree!
My 17 and 24,
11 and 12 the last before,
Not quite so straight as heretofore.
My 6, 5, 19, 28,
You may be if you work and wait.
My 2 will stand for twice a score,
+ thirty — twenty more.
My 16 and my 32,
A preposition brings to view.
My 21 and 8 may be
The union of you and me.
My 30, 26, and 7,
Conceal concealment, and—eleven,
My 29 and 31,
With 15 added, oft will run,
And spring upon its trembling prey,
In house or garden, night or day.
My 33, should it appear,
Well, don't play softer, Mary dear.
My whole, a proverb, old and true,
Which I must leave—to solve—with you.

Twenty-five Marks.

All girls under 21 are eligible for competition. Answers to be written on one side of the paper only, and to reach the office of THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C., addressed to the Puzzle Editor, not later than the 11th of November. The Editor's decision in all cases to be final.

Chat with the . . . Girl of the Period.

By THE EDITOR.

My Dear Girls,—I have received a number of letters from you asking me if I did not think that the opinion expressed by Pet's friend that educated and gently born girls ought to go into domestic service a degrading one.

"Rosamund," "Louisa," and "Guinevere," are especially indignant, and think they detect a certain sympathy in my tone towards this proposal. "Belinda" asks where the correspondence appeared to which "Pet's" friend alluded.

It appeared in the *Daily Chronicle*. It began by a letter from Miss Frances Lowe, who has the great subject of women's occupations at her fingers' ends. She drew a painful picture of the straits to which some women writers are reduced because of the glut in the market of the work they can produce. Annie Swan, whose name needs no introduction to my girls, said—and said truly enough—that the area of women's occupations should be enlarged. I do not think that she meant to revive the rather barren experiment of the "lady-help." I think that what she had in view was that women, even of culture and refinement, might put their pride in their pockets and go out as cooks, or nurses, or what not. And while I think that domestic service plain, pure and simple, for girls of culture, is rather a counsel of perfection, I also think that many domestic activities might supply them with well-paid and agreeable employment. I am no new convert to that view, as my girls will remember, for I have insisted upon it more than once in the pages of The Girl's Realm. I think that domestic life is a much larger interest than many of us who seek employment seem to be aware. American girls have found it so. It is not all cooking and making beds. A girl delicately nurtured might find it impossible to take to this kind of drudgery, even through want of strength for it, to say nothing of the want of taste. But there are many details of household management in which the aid of girls like "Gwen," "Laura," and "Peg," of refined taste, would be invaluable. The art of setting the table, for instance, for dinners and ceremonial meals, has become an art of itself. It would be quite possible for girls to earn perhaps only a little at first by learning how to adorn tables artistically and economically. Many a busy woman who does not live in Mayfair, but who now and then gives a quiet little party, would be glad to find some capable girl who could take off her hands the entire labour of preparation, and who earns her living by giving this kind of occasional help in housekeeping. I emphasize the word "occasional" because I think this is just the kind of help that so many persons of moderate means want, and would be willing to pay for, and which many girls trained to the task could give. Not everybody can afford a housekeeper; but it must have happened to nearly every woman at the head of a house to feel the want of someone who would take the place for a day or two in a time of emergency. It might be a time of serious illness, or absence from home for a pleasure jaunt, or of active concentration upon some work that must be done. The occasional housekeeper, in short, moderate in her charges, and with a sympathetic sense of the needs of small households, should do well, both for her employers and for herself. The great thing we have to get into our minds is that in the vast majority of houses there is no possibility of regularly engaging persons for special functions, but there is a frequent need of occasional help.

To all the girls who so frequently ask me how they can earn some money, I would reply: "Learn how to do one or two things needful well, and remembering the dignity of work, however humble, that is well done, set about turning your skill to account."

A letter that I have received from Rhoda bears very much upon this subject.

She writes:

"Dear Editor: Uncle Hugh says that women were much better when they baked and brewed and spun at home. Do you think they were better? Dick says Uncle Hugh is quite right, women ought to stay at home. When he marries, he says his wife must stay at home and look pretty, and see that his dinner is good. He

says that it is silly for a woman to try to do what men do. It was all rubbish what some girls wrote to you about their careers. I told Dick I have heard of girls who know ever so much more than boys. Dick says when women are clever they are draggle-tailed. Uncle Hugh says Dick ought to write about the decay of domesticity. What does that mean? I wish you would tell me if you think women were better when they baked and brewed at home."

CAROLINE writes:

"Do you think that a girl can prepare for a career and be domestic? And do you think that if she marries she will be as good a wife as the woman who had no thought of being a painter, or a writer, or a doctor?"

"SESAME," "HYPATIA," and "VIOLET," also ask me, in their different ways, if I think that a professional woman can make a good wife and mother.

To these various questions from my girls I answer that I do not think that true domesticity—that is to say, the spirit of the love of home, will ever die; it will only change its form. It is all very well to talk of its decay, but in talking of it let us know exactly what we mean. Some people mean, as RHODA'S uncle Hugh apparently does, that women no longer do exactly the same things in a house that their grandmothers used to do. They no longer bake and brew and spin the wool. There has been this kind of complaint in every age, as each one of the old domestic arts has passed into the domain of general industry; but really, if the modern housewife no longer brews her own ale, it is because the brewer does it better; and if she no longer spins, it is, for a similar reason. At one time the housewife did nearly everything, for the simple reason that this was the only way of getting it done. The domestic industries were not organised, and she had to carry them on, on her own account, often at great cost to her health, and hardly at less cost to her peace of mind. As each one of them was taken out of her hands by the organised industries, a great cry went up that she was losing everything that was of value and charm in her life. She gave up her spinning and her baking and her brewing as now she is largely giving up the washing, and really she was not only none the worse for it, but much the better; so I repeat, the decay of this kind of domesticity need not put us out very much.

But there is another kind of domesticity which cannot be impaired in the slightest degree without great detriment to the happiness of the whole people. I mean that kind which makes the woman the centre and source of all the best home influences, which makes her the children's friend as well as their mother, and to put it in one word—"the angel in the house."

I think this is in serious danger in some of the new-fashioned ideals. I think young people are tending to lose simplicity of life—simplicity in the point of view, and this, and not in mere brewing and baking and spinning, was that wherein their grandmothers and grandfathers had the better of them. The most dangerous foe to domesticity—the only domesticity I can talk about—is in the pretentiousness of a good many of our young people. So many of them are trying, not to *be* better, in life and character, but simply just to *seem* better in mere worldly circumstances. I think the earlier generations, from all I can hear of them, had very little pretensions of this sort. People were more content to be taken for just what they were, and to live their lives, not, indeed, without effort to become something else, but without any attempt to get at it by the short cut of mere affectation of states of life to which it had not pleased their Maker to call them. This I think is one of the besetting sins of the day, and this is the only enemy that true domesticity has to fear.

The domesticity that is more immediately concerned with the management of the home, may, I am sure, be made quite consistent with the carrying out of a great deal of work outside the home. We must face facts as they are. Many girls have to carry out work in that way, and it would be cruel to deny them the possibility of the domestic aptitudes. The two things may go together, if the love of the home is in the heart. Some of the best mothers I have known are breadwinners with pen and brush, and also among best of mothers I would rank some hard-working Lancashire mill-hands, whose mothering only begins when they have done the day's toil that helps to keep the home going.

There have been many answers to my reply to L'AIGLON'S letter. One of my girls, whose note, I am sorry to say, I have mislaid, writes that I have encouraged L'AIGLON'S ideals and discouraged those of the girls who nurse high ambitions in literature—such as those "JEANNETTE" expressed. I am sorry if I have left that impression upon my correspondent's mind. I was amused, and also touched by L'AIGLON'S description of her dreams of future glory. They are so glowing and so exalted. It was the young hope and ardent enthusiasm pulsating through so many of the letters that I have received which saddened and appealed to me.

"RENIE," who is herself on the stage, writes:

"Your answer to L'AIGLON interested me so much. I think L'AIGLON'S ideal is that of a true actress's ambition. I think we all feel a little like her when we begin. I have been now some years on the stage, and I love my profession as much as ever. I wonder if L'AIGLON has any idea of the difficulties and barriers one has to overcome before you reach anything like fame. Of course, if you have great genius or great beauty, your career is an easier one, still, you would probably need a great deal of patience before you attained success. The constant travelling and the continual repetitions of one's part are fatiguing and dispiriting. Of one thing I am sure, you can be as good, loveable, self-respecting a woman on the stage as in any other calling. It lies entirely with yourself."

I have had several letters from girls who are eager to have the opportunity of seeing more of the contributions sent up to "OUR READERS' OWN REALM." I deplore that so much of the good work that reaches me from my girls should not be more widely seen. I purpose, therefore, at Easter, to hold an exhibition of the best contributions that have been sent up during the course of the year to the various departments of "OUR READERS' OWN REALM." All girls will be welcomed visitors to this exhibition. The result of "OUR READERS' OWN REALM" for July will appear in January.

Your friend,

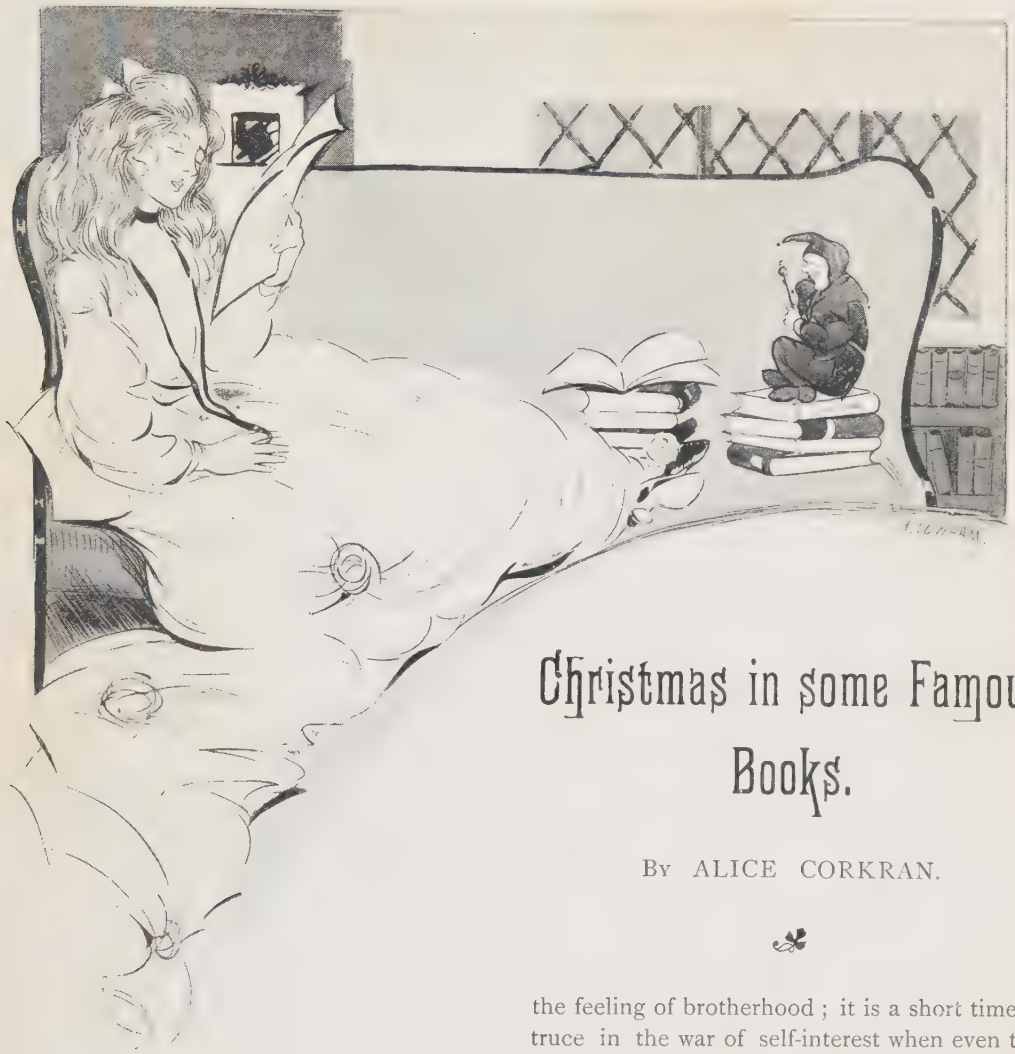
THE EDITOR.

THE SHIPBUILDER'S DAUGHTER.

"Standing before
Her father's door,
He saw the form of his promised bride."

—*See Editor's note on page 101.*

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE SECOND.



Christmas in some Famous Books.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

CHRISTMAS and literature are bound together, and their close alliance is one of the most curious things in the history of letters. Literature has kept up the idea of Christmas, has worked through Christmas and with Christmas. The spirit of the great festival, which brought into the world the idea of peace and goodwill, the idea of the brotherhood of man has never been absent from a sound and healthy literature. It is to be noted that whenever there has been a slackening of human thought and feeling about this idea of brotherhood, there has been a revival in literature of the idea of Christmas to strengthen it again. Christmas is, in fact, a great annual revival of the feeling of brotherhood; it is a short time of truce in the war of self-interest when even the most selfish of us come to understand, after a fashion, that there is such a thing as brotherhood in the race. They may do this after the crudest fashion. It may be merely in giving their share of pudding to a beggar at the gate when they have had enough of it themselves, but we must be thankful for small mercies, and without Christmas, and the influences of Christmas, they would rather have kept it for themselves by way of proclaiming their faith in the gospel of self-help. But for Christmas to freshen up our faith in something not ourselves, we should be by this time in a very poor case.

The Church saw that, when it kept up the festival through the darkest ages of strife and violence and greed—for those dear old past

times, whatever many of us may please to say of them, were very terrible ages indeed. Men lived in almost perpetual warfare, life seemed hardly worth a day's purchase, and if they did not war with one another quite so successfully in their counting-houses as they do now, it was not for want of the will. The celebration of Christmas must have come every year to the poor, who were especially the victims of this state of things, as a precious consolation, and the Miracle Play with the Scripture story acted before them, must have been something like a new revelation. Literature, in fact, groping out in the dark, was striving to lay hold of the Christmas ideal and hold it fast. At a later time, when the warfare had been transferred from the field to the counting house, and the hardest gospel of political economy we have heard throughout these islands was delivered, Dickens put it to shame, by reviving the idea of Christmas in literature. Men had written a good deal about the festival before him, but he gave it a new meaning in his great Christmas stories, and that meaning is that Christmas is a truce, that Christmas comes to remind us all that the sense of brotherhood is a living thing, and that there is something nobler than trying to get rich. The close connection between Christmas and the finer humanitarian spirit in literature is so interesting that I have taken it for the subject of my paper. The inner meaning of Christmas, as a social festival, is that the world is not such a hard place as we are sometimes inclined to think it. Those who have taught themselves to suspect their human nature in all its gentle impulses have been the only foes of Christmas. The Puritans, with all their virtues, had this fault; they did not believe in joy and tenderness, they believed in fighting, and in punishment when men faltered in faith. They tried to put down Christmas as a revival of joy in the heart, but Christmas, happily, was too strong for them. The banished pudding and beef, the holly and mistletoe took their revenge in the Restoration, and if we knew all we should probably find that the grim Puritan ideal had a good deal to do with bringing the Restoration about. Certainly the hardest of us must confess that they are inclined to feel "good" at Christmas time, and this not merely in the purely religious sense, but rather in the modern American sense of feeling happy. The greatest service that literature can render us is to keep that feeling of happiness fresh in our minds.

The lesson of Christmas was first taught by the Miracle Plays, which largely supplied the place of literature to the unlettered masses through the Middle Ages. These Miracle Plays were a strange medley of clownish pranks, jest, and divine narrative and episode, but for all their travesties of the marvellous story, they enabled the people to realise it with singular vividness. Between the two series of dramatic scenes culled from the Old and the New Testament, appeared the interlude of the "Shepherd's Play." In it was told the incomparable story of Christmas. The treatment varies in two versions of that play, but the incidents are the same. The Shepherds are rude and clownish simpletons, squabbling between themselves and playing pranks on each other. One of them has stolen a sheep, and he has managed to escape detection by getting his wife to put the animal in the child's cradle. His comrades suspect him, nevertheless. It is a curiously realistic scene of rustic bickering and jesting, when suddenly a burst of song fills the air. The first carol heard on earth is chanted by the angelic hosts, with its recurring triumphant burden—GLORIA IN EXCELSIS. The herdsmen at first mock, then gradually awe overcomes them, they follow the angels to the manger and, falling prostrate, worship the holy child, offer their simple gifts, and rise saints and prophets.

It is no wonder that the story of Christmas, thus vividly presented, laid hold of the popular imagination, and that for one blessed day the sorrows and perplexities were laid aside, the inequalities in rank and fortune were forgotten. For one great day the vassal feasted with his lord, the wassail cup was passed from the beggar to the baron who quaffed from it alike, the Yule log burnt on the hearth, and at its generous heat the shivering poor warmed themselves undisturbed. Oh! blessed day of truce from earthly care and unbrotherliness!

Herrick, in his "Ceremonies of Christmas," has sung of these days:

By permission of Mr. Wm. Heinemann.

A DREAM TREE, SEEN BY HANS ANDERSEN'S LITTLE MATCH GIRL.

By permission of Mr. Wm. Heinemann.

Come bring with a noise
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the firing ;
While my good dame, she
Bids ye all be free,
And drink to your heart's desiring.

With the last year's brand
Light the new block, and
For good success in his spending.
On your psalteries play,
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is a-tending.

Drink now the strong beer,
Cut the white loaf here,
The while the meat is a-shredding.
For the rare mince-pie,
And the plums stand by
To fill the paste that's a-kneading.

And Walter Scott has swelled with his strong human note the chorus in praise of Christmas in the past :

"England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale ;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer,
The poor man's heart through half the year."

The work of the Miracle Play was done when the Reformation placed the Bible in every man's hand, and the unlettered heard it read in every church in the familiar tongue. Other dramatic literature began to be associated with the Christmas season. We hear of Mr. Upton, a Master of Westminster School, writing for his boys in English "Ralph Roister Doister," the first English comedy that presented the adventures of a fop, under Henry VIII., and was acted at Christmas time. At one of the "Grand Christmases," at the Inner Temple, in the fourth year of Queen Elizabeth's reign, there is produced the first tragedy in English "Gorboduc," the theme of which are the sorrows of a divided kingdom. These grand Christmases at the Temple were sumptuous affairs. The company entered to the sound of music ; the grandmaster and his guests sang a carol before and after dinner and supper. And for nights and days there was the sound of revelry and dancing. In these vigorous Tudor days, the spirit of Christmas jollity waxed strong, and showed itself in wild and picturesque customs. The masques, the mummeries, the fairs, the antics of the revellers obeying the behests

By permission of Messrs. Chapman & Hall.

DICKENS'S CHRISTMAS : MR. PICKWICK GALLANTLY LEADS MRS. WARDLE UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

of their elected Lord of Misrule, savoured often of a Bacchanalian exuberance of spirit. For all the riot of these fantastic Christmas festivities, the note of charity rang out strong and sweet. The people held the sacred story enshrined in quaint legends. Shakespeare tells us of the belief that the cock crowed all night on Christmas eve, thereby frightening away the evil spirits :

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
The bird of dawning singeth all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome—then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, no witch hath power to charm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time."

Thus the spirit of Christmas increased in frolic and jest through England until the days of the Puritans. To those men of iron, religion meant wrestling of the spirit, the continual struggle of Christian with Apollyon. They worked, they fought, they prayed, but there was no tenderness or gaiety in their souls. The wild revels at Christmas, the mistletoe and holly decorating the churches and homes, the yule log and candles they held, savoured of heathenish rites, and were direct inheritances from the worship of Baal, the Sun God. The troops of mummers and masques given over to the control of the Lord of Misrule were a scandal to them, and the mirth seemed to them that of lost souls. Those grim and earnest men saw no inner meaning in the social spirit that spread sunshine over the land. They cared nothing, for the cry "Let us all be merry," although in that cry was included a claim for the poor.

"And those that hardly all the year
Had bread to eat, or rags to wear
Will have both clothes and dainty fare
And all the day be merry."

For awhile gaiety and gloom contended for the empire of Christmas. The grim men seemed to triumph. The festivals of the church were discountenanced. Sunday was the only day that they

By courtesy of Messrs. Macmillan.

THE CHRISTMAS OF WASHINGTON IRVING, PRESENTED BY RALPH CALDECOTT.

Squire Bracebridge toasts the company on Christmas night.

THE CHRISTMAS OF GEORGE ELIOT IN "SILAS MARNER": "OLD SOLOMON IN HIS SEEDY CLOTHES AND LONG WHITE LOCKS, SEEMED TO BE LURING THAT DECENT COMPANY BY THE MAGIC SCREAM OF HIS FIDDLE."

From an Original Drawing by W. H. MARGETSON.

admitted to be sacred. Mirth-making had no place in their philosophy of life, and Christmas in its essential joyousness of spirit was of all Church festivals the one over which they shook their heads and frowned most darkly. Strange anomaly, however, it is, Milton, the Puritan poet, who in sublimest accents has sung the rapture of Christmas joy.

"But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began.
The winds with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kissed,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave."

By courtesy of Messrs. Macmillan.

WASHINGTON IRVING'S CHRISTMAS: THE COMPANY ASSEMBLED IN THE GREAT HALL OF SQUIRE BRACEBRIDGE'S MANSION ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

From the drawing by RALPH CALDECOTT.

Gladsomeness and gloom long strove for empire over Christmas, and although the festival was shorn of much of its honours, yet the spirit of cheer and brotherhood conquered in the end. Still the holly and mistletoe hung in churches and in homes, families gathered together, the old carols were sung as of yore, the wandering minstrelsy of the waits called the world to happiness and to the spirit of charity. Washington Irving, travelling through England in the earlier years of the nineteenth century, has left in his sketch-book, a picture of a Christmas Eve and day that he spent under the roof of Squire Bracebridge. The squire was the richest man in these parts, the owner of the hall, and large estates. He was a staunch Conservative, his heart was with the England of the past, and his hobby was to preserve the ancient festivals and holidays. The illustrious American traveller was his guest, and the hospitality he received is the subject of the most delightful pages of his sketch-book. The yule log burnt in the great hearth, the Christmas candles wreathed with evergreens shone on the supper-table like stars of the first magnitude, the Squire neglected the Christmas

fare of those days, and ate frumenty, the old dish of wheat boiled in milk and highly spiced, that our ancestors dedicated to the season.

He describes the large company of family connections that gathered in the hall. "Old uncles and aunts, comfortable married dames and superannuated spinsters, blooming country cousins, half-fledged striplings and bright-eyed boarding-school hoydens." After the supper comes the dance, in which old and young joined, and the Squire footed it "with a partner with whom he affirmed he had danced at every Christmas for nearly half a century." The next day, after church, the whole house seemed abandoned to merriment. The Christmas dinner was a bountiful banquet, to which the guests were led by the harpist and minstrels. The first dish brought in with much ceremony was a boar's head garnished with rosemary, but before partaking of it the host sang a carol in Latin, in the chorus of which the guests joined. The feast ended with the passing of the wassail cup, redolent of spiced wines and

By permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.

KING VALLAROSA READING THE CRIM TARTARY'S LETTERS TO HIS WIFE AND THE LOVELY PRINCESS ANGELICA AT BREAKFAST.

From "The Rose and the Ring."

By permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.

THE CHRISTMAS OF W. M. THACKERAY: THE MULLIGAN AND OTHER GUESTS OF MRS. PERKINS DANCING THE POLKA AFTER SUPPER.

sweetened with roasted apples. The pencil of Caldecott helps us to realise that scene of ancient merriment. "Never did Christmas board display a more goodly and gracious assemblage of countenances; those who were not handsome were at least happy; and happiness is a rare improver of your hard-favoured visage. Nor did the revels close with the dinner; for presently came an irruption on the scene of a motley crew of masqueraders, led by one of the guests, disguised as the Lord of Misrule.

The Christmas shown us by Washington Irving is Christmas of three hundred years ago, lagging behind in the opening day of the nineteenth century. George Eliot gives us, in "Silas Marner," Christmas as the well-to-do yeomanry kept it in those early years of eighteen hundred. It is a far more homely scene, at which sweet Nancy Lammeter assists. There is plenty of merriment, and the tables are laden with good cheer. When the company has discussed the excellent fare, Solomon, the village fiddler, breaks into the strains of Sir Roger de Coverley as a signal that it is time to begin the dance, and there is a ready response. "So Solomon, holding his white head on one side and playing vigorously, marched forward at the head of the gay procession into the White parlour where the mistletoe bough was hung and multitudinous tallow candles made a rather brilliant effect, gleaming from among old-fashioned oval mirrors fastened in the panels of the white wainscot. A quaint procession: Old Solomon, in his seedy clothes and long white locks, seemed to be luring that decent company by the magic scream of his fiddle—luring discreet matrons in turban-shaped caps, nay, Mrs. Crackenthorp herself, the summit of whose perpendicular feather was on a level with the Squire's shoulder—luring fair lasses, complacently conscious of very short waists and skirts blameless of front folds—burly fathers in large variegated waistcoats, and ruddy sons, for the most part shy and sheepish, in short nether garments and very long coat tails."

Thus the blithe spirit of Christmas good-fellowship lingered in the hall and in the farm house at the beginning of last century, but even then an influence was abroad that was to prove more destructive to its ideal than did the sombre rule of the Puritans. The doctrine of a dismal political economy, the gospel of the utilitarian philosophy, was hardening the hearts of men. Classes were drifting apart, the making of wealth seemed the only one object men thought worth following. Worldliness and brotherhood were now contending for Empire. It was when this spirit was at its harshest that Dickens came, and his heart revolted against the mercilessness of the prevailing outlook for life. This hard world must be softened, this selfish spirit be made less grasping. How could it be done? He seized upon the idea of Christmas, with all its spiritual associations of kindness, of good fellowship, of appeasement, and he never let it go. In an age sunk in the despair of materialism he took Christmas for his theme. It was by the spirit of Christmas that he made his appeal to the hearts of men, entreating them to make the world a gentler place, one in which the poor, the weak, the fallen, could find a place. All through his work this buoyant and tender note of human sympathy, which is the note of Christmas, reigns. The humour of Pickwick, the gay oddities, the frolicsome absurdities that fill the pages of that immortal book, declare the beauty of forbearance, the happiness that comes of unselfishness. The assurance that only by a revival of the sense of brotherhood can the whole world be brought back to happiness and civilisation.

Then came the series of Christmas books that has made Dickens's name so intimately associated with the season. When Thackeray read the Carol he said to a friend, "It seems to me a national benefit and to every man and woman who reads it a personal kindness." Thackeray, too, was weaving Christmas spells with his golden pen. The story of the ball Mrs. Perkins gave to her friends and neighbours on the 19th of December breathes the very spirit of Christmas jollity. What a goodly company we meet assembled in these pages. The terrible Mulligan holding in his clutches the frightened Miss Luttle; the poor Frenchman, staggering under the weight of his partner, the redoubtable authoress Miss Bunion; how winsome is pretty Miss Joy, as wreathed with smiles she bounds past; there goes coquettish Miss Bustleton

CHRISTMAS IN SUMMER SEAS.—CAROL SINGING ON BOARD A LINER IN MID-OCEAN.
Presented by an artist of to-day—W. HATHERELL, R.I.

and other adorable maidens and comely youths. Then that story of the *Rose and the Ring*, does it not teach the lesson of kindness and simple worth under the gayest of disguises. Thackeray's daughter tells us how these inimitable figures were drawn to give pleasure to children at a Twelfth Night party in Rome. The small guests were clamouring for a representation of a king and queen. The young folk had gone home and left their host's drawings scattered on the table; he took them up, and about these neglected sketches weaved the enchanting story, the charm of which never fades.

The Christmas tree is absent from all these scenes of Christmas revelry in England in the days of our grandfathers and grandmothers. It came over from over the Northern Sea. Hans Christian Andersen has immortalised it. In the beautiful edition that Mr. Heinemann has brought out of the tales of this prince of story-tellers, we see the tree who pined for glorious life beyond the fragrant pine-forest, and who for one brief hour enjoyed the incomparable splendour of lighted branches laden with toys, felt the eager touch of lithe fingers, heard the acclamation of childish voices. We see the visionary tree shining before the dying gaze of the little match girl, who, lighting a match to warm her frozen fingers, smiles with pale lips at the tree that seems to her a tree in paradise. Oh! simple and regal soul of Andersen, who has brought to a prosaic age the freshness and the glamour of fairyland. These are but a few of the great books that have preserved Christmas for us. I wish I could tell you of the ghost stories told by the guests round the fire of Griyll Grange on a Christmas night; of the American classic, Dreanthorpe; but I have space only to turn for a moment to our poets.

Tennyson dwells upon the mystic joy of Christmas—

> "Rise, happy morn; rise, holy morn,
> Draw forth the cheerful day from night.
> O Father, touch the east, and light
> The light that shone when Hope was born."

Robert Browning in his great poem, "Christmas Eve and Easter Day," celebrates the idea of Christian Brotherhood.

Coventry Patmore, in "The Angel in the House," has touched upon the more familiar and domestic aspects of Christmas.

The holy season is girdled by an atmosphere of song. The carol of the angels has been caught up and repeated age after age. In churches, in homes, on distant plains, on ships at sea, whether captive in the ice-bound arctic circle, or drifting on a starry night of tropic calm in that hemisphere where Christmas is set in summer, the choir of voices rises and blends to welcome.

> "And all the souls on earth shall sing
> On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
> And all the souls on earth shall sing
> On Christmas day in the morning.
>
> Then let us all rejoice amain,
> On Christmas day, on Christmas day;
> Then let us all rejoice amain
> On Christmas day in the morning."

"'YES, IT IS,' SAID MR. EZRA TUBBS, SOLEMNLY."

Santa Claus and two Jack-Knives.

By MARY E. WILKINS,

Author of "A New England Nun," "The Portion of Labour," etc.

Illustrated by W. H. MARGETSON.

THE desire of possession is a curious thing. None can tell what an ignoble object even in a great mind may serve as a nucleus for its pearl of price. Tommy Barlow had not, presumably, a mind of unusual greatness, being only an ordinary village-boy. Still, he might have had as great an ambition of possession as a George Washington, but all his desires were concentrated upon a jack-knife.

When the school-teacher, stepping forward from behind her desk to the front of the platform that she might be heard to better advantage, held forth upon noble aims in life, and the duty of constant striving towards the distant heights, and wound up with a ringing quotation from "Excelsior," Tommy Barlow thought of a jack-knife, a jack-knife with four blades. So also did Zelotes, commonly called Loty, Dickinson, only his ambition was more circumscribed. He did not specify so clearly and determinately the number of blades. He would have been contented with less than four, so

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long as he had the jack-knife. Loty Dickinson and Tommy Barlow were close and inseparable friends, and shared wishes and aspirations, though Tommy was generally the leader, having a stronger imagination. Loty, in the state of his family finances, could scarcely, left to himself, have imagined even the possible possession of a new jack-knife, of any jack-knife at all except the slender chance of his elder brother's with one broken blade.

When the elder brother grew old enough to go to work and earn a knife for himself, his old one might possibly fall to him; but it was a long wait, for the brother was only three years older than Loty, who was ten. As for Tommy Barlow, his chances were a little better, or he considered them so. Tommy had a rich uncle, his great-uncle, who was an old bachelor, and there was always a belief in the family that this uncle, after whom Tommy had been named, might some day do something for him. He never had, even to the extent of a silver spoon for his name, as Tommy's mother often remarked; but the belief always remained. Tommy's parents' imagination in that direction took the form of an education and a start in business; Tommy's took the form of a four-bladed jack-knife.

"Mebbe my Great-uncle Thomas will give me a jack-knife some day," he said to Loty Dickinson. "He's rich as mud, you know."

"Wish I had an uncle," returned Loty, kicking his heels against the rail of the fence.

The two boys sat on the top-rail of the fence of the corner lot, where they would naturally have sat to whittle, if they had owned the jack-knives.

"Well, I'll let you use my knife if you're careful," said Tommy, generously.

"Hour to a time?" inquired Loty, eagerly.

"Mebbe."

At the right of Tommy, removed to a distance which indicated to a nicety the deference due to a large boy from a small one, sat little Fanny Chase. His name was Francis, but he was so small and timid, and pink and white, that the boys had nick-named him "Fanny." Even Tommy and Loty called him Fanny, though they had been fierce in his defence against a petty persecution when he first came to school. The Chases were under a sort of ban in the village. They were poor and shiftless, and had been so for generations, and there had been an occasional outbreak of actual crime. They were under a standing conviction of poverty and laziness, with a standing suspicion of something worse. There was always a large family of Chases, for they multiplied like the sprawling burdock weeds around their old shackly house, and a swarm of children, puny and dull for the most part, with their diseased hereditary tendencies strengthening with their growth, infested the schools. Fanny was the youngest, and the best of them, the school-teacher said. There was something about Fanny's little pink-and-white face, his blue eyes full of fear, yet with a lingering confidence in one's kind intent towards him, his slight, puny little figure shrinking against the wall, falling to the rear of a pushing crowd, which appealed to a woman, but the boys had been merciless when Fanny Chase first appeared at school. It was one morning in September. The teacher had not arrived, and Tommy and Loty were late. When they reached the schoolyard this little new boy, pale and white-eyed and dumb, cowering with utter defeat and helplessness, was the centre of a crowd of little yelling, hooting, taunting savages. They were good-natured in a way, not one of them would have harmed the child; but the delight of the human boy in the torment of that which can be tormented, had awoke within them and made them drunk and mad with it.

Then it was that Tommy arose. Very probably, had he been on the scene from the first, he might himself have led the tormentors. Coming late he had an outside point of view, and the enormity of the failings of his kind was clearly evident to him.

"They are plaguein' that poor little chap," he cried to Loty, "an' it's a mean shame. He's awful little, an' he's scared 'most to death, an' now he's beginnin' to cry. Come on, Loty."

With that Tommy, with Loty, who loved a row, at heel, dashed into the crowd and carried the day by the suddenness and unexpectedness of the assault. Two boys, one of them bigger than either Tommy or Loty, were laid prostrate,

and sat on, and pommelled, amid hoarse shouts of "Lemme up! Lemme up, I say, will ye?" while the intimidated crowd half-circled at a distance, and little Fanny Chase was nowhere until he reappeared, bringing a fence-rail much longer than himself to Tommy with the wise idea that it could be used effectually for further chastisement of the enemy. Then there was a roar of mirth, and the teacher's blue-ribboned hat was seen above the green bushes in the road, and in a second the noise had subsided, the prostrate boys were up, dusting their jackets and muttering, and Tommy and Loty were walking off with their triumph of victory concealed under a mien of general peacefulness. But from that day both of them, and Tommy especially, had a most devoted and loyal follower in little Fanny Chase, though he followed them at a respectful distance. He never presumed. He always kept a space between them indicative of respect and deference, and the wide difference between their age and wisdom and his youth and ignorance, as he did now. He heard every word the two said with adoring interest, but he said nothing. Fanny never spoke to his two chiefs unless they first spoke to him. When they jumped down from the fence, where they would have sat to whittle if they had owned jack-knives, he jumped down also, and followed them down the road. The two older boys scuffled their bare feet as they went along, and so did Fanny. The three disappeared in a cloud of dust.

That was in August, too early to think of Christmas, but two months later, Tommy, not Loty—he had too little hope—began to talk

"THE TWO BOYS SAT ON THE TOP RAIL OF THE FENCE, AND REMOVED TO A DISTANCE WHICH INDICATED TO A NICETY THE DEFERENCE DUE TO A LARGE BOY FROM A SMALL ONE, SAT LITTLE FANNY CHASE."—(*p.* 94).

about the possibility of attaining the jack-knife as a Christmas present.

"'Spose my Great-uncle Thomas should give me that knife for a Christmas present," he said to Loty.

"Never did give you anything, did he?" said Loty, who was at times a little envious of the ownership of this rich great-uncle.

"Well, no, he never has yet," admitted Tommy, "but, then, he might."

"Well, I ain't got any rich uncles," said Loty, "and I don't see any chance of me gettin' any knife, 'less I find one."

"Mebbe you will," said Tommy. "Folks do lose jack-knives, and it stands to reason that somebody has got to find 'em."

"Well, if I knew who lost it I'd have to give it back, I 'spose. Mother'd make," growled Loty, who was pessimistic that day.

"Mebbe you wouldn't know who lost it," suggested Tommy, hopefully.

"It would be jest my luck to see him drop it," said Loty, "and I ain't goin' round hunting for jack-knives."

This time Tommy and Loty were on their way to school, with little Fanny Chase trotting after them. It was a cold day late in October, and Fanny had just put on shoes for the first time that season. They were his brother's old ones, the soles of one flapped, and he walked with difficulty. When they reached the school-house, some girls standing in the door began to laugh, and Tommy turned to see what the matter was. He could not attack girls for making sport of his *protégé*, but he looked at them fiercely. When he saw Fanny's clapping shoe, he seized him by the shoulders and ordered him to hold up his foot.

"Lemme see that shoe, kid," said he. "Loty, bring us a stone, will ye?"

Loty fetched the stone, and assisted Fanny to stand on one foot, while Tommy hammered away industriously at the sole of the shoe.

"It ain't any use," said he, finally. "The nails are all gone. There ain't any way but to cut off that sole up to where it's loose, and the bell's ringin'. Now is the time when a feller had ought to have a jack-knife. Seems to me a jack-knife is more necessary than some other things."

"That's so," said Loty.

"I told mother I'd rather have that knife than a new cap; and I'd make my old one do this winter," said Tommy, "And she said mebbe it would, but she didn't get the knife; said we needed the money to buy flour. I don't care much for bread, never did. 'Nough sight rather have cookies. Now, look at that, will ye? There, this kid has got to go into the school-room with that sole clapping the floor every step and all the fellers laughin' and makin' him cry, poor little chap, just because we haven't got any jack-knives."

"That's so," said Loty.

The bell was ringing towards the finish. Suddenly Tommy made a motion of decision.

"Off with that shoe, youngster," he ordered: and while the wondering, half-whimpering little fellow obeyed, Tommy pulled off his own shoe and extended it to the other.

"Here, get into that quick," said he.

"What you going to do yourself?" inquired Loty, astonished.

"I'm going barefoot," said Tommy, stoutly. "Guess it won't hurt me any; my feet are about as tough as leather, anyhow. Give me that shoe, youngster; I'm goin' to get father to fix this to-night—reckon he can."

So Tommy went barefoot into the school-room with his pockets bulging with shoes, and when the teacher investigated, and found the broken one, said never a word in explanation; but he had established a stronger bond, if that were possible, between his little follower and himself.

There was a week's vacation at Christmas-time. Christmas came on a Thursday, and the vacation began on the Monday before. Tommy hung his stocking on Wednesday night. He knew he was too big a boy, and he felt mortified that he did so, and made up his mind to never speak of it even to Loty; but he had a hope, though his mother had told him that it was a vain one. "You can hang up your stocking if you want to," said she, "but you know well enough you can't have any Christmas present in it. Your father got all behindhand with his sickness last year, and we've got to be careful of every penny if we don't want to mortgage the place. I'm sorry, and so is your father; we'd both of us give anything, if we could buy

you a jack-knife, or anything you'd set your heart on; but we can't, and you must be a good boy and make the best of it."

"I don't expect you and father to buy me a jack-knife," said Tommy, "but I thought mebbe Uncle Thomas——"

"Your uncle Thomas has never given a Christmas present in his life," said Mrs. Barlow, "and he's just given five thousand dollars to the town towards a library. He believes in giving big things that shew; he isn't going to come down to anything so small as jack-knives, so don't you get your hopes up, child."

A long struggle, not with poverty but with scantiness, had made the woman bitter, and deprivation had caused her to value unduly that of which she was deprived. That night, after Tommy had gone to bed, her heart failed her at the sight of his much-mended stocking hanging limply from the mantel-shelf. "See, the poor child has hung his stocking, and I haven't got a thing to put in it!" she said to Mr. Barlow. "I told him I hadn't; but he wanted to hang it. He always has a forlorn hope that your Uncle Thomas is going to give him a jack-knife."

"Catch him giving anything, except big things that pay him well in praise and credit," said Tommy's father. He looked angrily and sadly at the dangling stocking. "Seems to me Tommy is too old to hang his stocking," said he, impatiently.

"Oh, he isn't very old, John—only ten," said his mother. "Poor little fellow, how he has wanted a four-bladed jack-knife."

"Well, he'll have to go without," said his father; "I never had one. I'm a poor man, and Tommy is the son of a poor man, and most likely he will be one himself. He's got to make up his mind that he can't have things, and make the best of it."

"If we can leave this place clear, Tommy will have something, and we ain't so poor after all, John: we have all we need. Folks can get along without four-bladed jack-knives, and not be poor, seems to me. I'm going to make some molasses candy and put in his stocking, and cover his ball new—that will be better than nothing," said Tommy's mother.

Tommy's father said nothing, but he came home from the store that evening with a big orange and a little paper parcel. "Here's an orange to put in the stocking," said he, "and I met his school-teacher and she gave me this for him. Said she had hoped she could have a tree at the school this year; but she wasn't able to, and so she'd send this by me."

"Wonder what it is," said Mrs. Barlow. "If it was only a knife, wouldn't he be pleased!"

But it was a little instructive book instead of a knife. "It's a pretty little book," said Tommy's mother, "and it looks real improving and interesting. It seems to be about Africa, and I should think he might be interested to read about Africa. I suppose it is a wonderful country; but I wish it had been a jack-knife. Who's that at the door at this time of night? Do ask who it is before you open the door, John."

"It's somebody to ask the way, I guess," said Mr. Barlow. "I heard a team stop out here."

"Well, do ask who it is before you open the door," charged Mrs. Barlow. She was very timid, and she ran upstairs to Tommy's room, while her husband went to the door. She listened and heard a man's voice, and her husband ask someone in. Finally, when she heard the front door shut, she went to the head of the stairs, and called to know who it was. "It was Uncle Thomas; he was driving past, and wanted to know if I had the deed of this house handy," said Mr. Barlow.

"What for?" asked Mrs. Barlow, going downstairs. "He ain't goin' to overreach you anyway, is he?"

"No, don't you be scared, it was only about the boundary lines; he's going to buy that piece of land south of the field; it's all right—just the way he thought it was."

"Well," said Mrs. Barlow, "I do wish your Uncle Thomas had brought a jack-knife for poor Tommy."

"Well, he didn't," replied Mr. Barlow. "Catch him; but I've thought of something else to put in the stocking: that Spanish silver dollar that belonged to father."

"Well, maybe he'll like it," said Mrs. Barlow, doubtfully; "but I don't know just what he can do with it."

"He can look at it," said Mr. Barlow, taking the great Spanish dollar out of the desk drawer and putting it on top of the stocking. It had been one of the wonders of his own childhood, and he thought his son might prize it.

So it happened that Tommy Barlow, when he crept out in the pale dawn of Christmas morning to the cold sitting-room to inspect his stocking, found quite a full one. His heart gave a great leap of delight as he caught sight of the bulging stocking. He took it down and crept back upstairs, and took it into bed. He hardly dared open it; he felt it first—it certainly did seem as if there was something which felt like a knife.

Then he began pulling out the parcels with his trembling fingers, and opening them one by one. He found the dollar, orange, the candy, the ball, and the school-teacher's little book, whose title he did not even look at; then he came to the last parcel, and it was—a jack-knife with four blades.

Tommy looked at it; he was fairly pale. It was the first real joy of possession of his whole life, and he would never, if he lived to be a man, and become as rich as Crœsus, have a greater. He opened the blades one after another; he tried one a little on the bedpost. He found it was very sharp; there was never such a knife.

But when he dressed himself, and went downstairs to show his mother, she turned so pale he thought she was going to faint away. "Why, Tommy Green Barlow," said she, "where did you get that knife?"

"Why, it was in my stocking, mother," replied Tommy, staring at her in bewilderment.

"No, it wasn't in your stocking. It couldn't have been in your stocking. Where is your father? John, come here; see this!"

When Mr. Barlow looked at the knife, he turned to Tommy more sternly than he had ever done in his life. "Where did you get this, sir?" said he. When Tommy's father called him "sir," it was serious.

Tommy began to cry. His joy over his new knife seemed of short duration. "It—it was in my stocking, father," said he.

"No, it was not in your stocking. Your mother and I know it was not in your stocking. We know just what was in your stocking. Where did you get this knife, sir?"

"It was in—my—stocking," repeated Tommy, amid his sobs.

Tommy's father and mother looked at each other. They did not know what to think. Tommy had always been a truthful boy, and yet here was the knife, and here was this story which they knew, or thought they knew, to be a downright falsehood. Tommy's father was a very decided man, and when it came to a question like this, he was resolved not to give Tommy the benefit of the doubt. "Give me that knife, sir," said he, "and you go straight back upstairs till I tell you to come down."

When the sound of Tommy's sobs had died away, and they heard his chamber door shut, Mr. Barlow turned to his wife.

"I can't believe it," said he.

"Neither can I," said she.

"A downright lie like that," said Mr. Barlow.

"And where did he get the knife? Oh, John," she cried, "it looks as if—— Oh, John, our Tommy never stole!"

"I don't believe he did," said Mr. Barlow, "but everything is against him. Here he's been wanting a jack-knife all this time, and he got up first this morning."

"He'd have done that anyway," said Mrs. Barlow, suddenly. She looked at her husband. "John, you don't suppose your Uncle Thomas put that knife in that stocking, do you?" she cried.

"Oh, he couldn't," replied Mr. Barlow, but he looked reflective.

"Now, John Barlow, I ain't so sure. You know Tommy is a pretty boy, and you know old bachelors sometimes take fancies, and you know he's eccentric. Did you leave him alone in the room?"

"Well, yes, I did," admitted Mr. Barlow. "He was alone quite a spell, while I was in the bedroom getting the deed out of the box under the bed."

"Uncle Thomas put that knife in that stocking," said Mrs. Barlow, conclusively. Then she went to the door, and called "Tommy, Tommy, it's all right. Mother's found out all about it. Come right down and get your breakfast. Poor little boy!" she said. She was half

weeping over the cruel injustice with which they had treated Tommy. "Right after breakfast he must get dressed up and go and thank his Uncle Thomas," said she.

And so Tommy did, going down the street spick and span, in his little Sunday suit, with his hair very smooth, and his rosy cheeks shining with soap and water, and the precious knife in his pocket. But he came home rueful. "He says he didn't give it to me," he whimpered out; "he says he ain't got money to throw away on jack-knives, and he acted real mad."

"Then where did you get that jack-knife, Tommy Barlow?" said his mother, and his father echoed her, in a sterner voice than he had used before.

But Tommy refused to tell, and upstairs to his chamber he went again, sobbing all the way. "I'd rather not have had—a jack-knife," he wailed out, and he snatched the knife out of his pocket and flung it on the floor hard, then he dived head foremost into his bed, and sobbed until he fell asleep.

In the evening of Christmas Day came still further developments. Loty Dickinson appeared with his father and mother, each holding a hand and dragging him reluctant and bewildered as before some tribunal of justice. Loty had a jack-knife which had been found in his stocking in the same mysterious fashion, and they had come to see if Tommy knew anything about it.

"We hate to think our dear little boy would do such a dreadful wicked thing as to steal," said his mother, tearfully, "and then tell lies to keep from being punished; but we can't account for it. Your Tommy didn't give it to him, did he?"

"Tommy didn't have any money to buy jack-knives," said Mrs. Barlow; "and he's got one we can't account for, too. He's upstairs in his chamber. We sent him up there because he wouldn't tell."

An audible sniff came from Loty at that. He had red curly hair which stood out fiercely, and his face was red and rasped and wild. "You stop crying, sir," said his father. Then Loty burst out in a loud, irrepressible wail.

They called Tommy downstairs, and the two little boys were together subjected to a cross-examination from their parents, but all to no purpose. Not one word beyond the simple reiteration that they did not know where the knives had come from, could be forced from either of them.

"'YOU ARE NOT GOING TO PUNISH THIS BOY, MADAME,' SAID UNCLE THOMAS."—(*p.* 101)

"I declare," Mrs. Barlow said to Mr. Barlow, when the Dickinsons had gone, "it most makes me believe in Santa Claus!"

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Barlow.

"Well, I'd rather believe in Santa Claus than to think my precious Tommy could steal," said Mrs. Barlow, with a sob. She was getting fairly childish and hysterical.

"We haven't heard the last of it yet," prophesied Mr. Barlow, gloomily.

And it transpired that Mr. Barlow was right, for the next day came Mr. Ezra Tubbs, the store-keeper, who had heard of the mysterious jack-knives, and asked to see Tommy's. He looked at it, he opened the blades, he put on his glasses, and took it to the window, and squinted at it first with one eye, then the other, while Mr. and Mrs. Barlow looked on trembling, and Tommy glared from the position which he had been bidden to take, with fear and despair.

"H'm! I thought so," said Mr. Ezra Tubbs at last.

"Oh, don't tell me it is—don't!" cried Mrs. Barlow.

"Yes, it is," said Mr. Ezra Tubbs, solemnly.

Then Mrs. Barlow flew to Tommy and caught him in her arms, and held him, and looked fiercely over his head at Mr. Tubbs. "You shan't touch him, you shall not," she said. 'His father can pay you. We'll mortgage this place; we'll do anything. You shan't touch him."

"Gracious! I ain't goin' to touch him," said Mr. Ezra Tubbs, with a sort of angry stateliness. "What do you suppose I'm goin' to do with a child like that? He is a badly-trained child, and he'll fetch up on the gallows most likely, but I ain't goin' to set the law on him. All I want is either the price of that jack-knife or that jack-knife. He ain't whittled none with it, has he?"

"No, he ain't," said Mr. Barlow, stiffly. "Here's the knife, and I'd rather have cut off my right hand with it than have this happen, and that's all I can say; and he won't fetch up on the gallows if not sparing the rod can save him!"

So it happened that Tommy Barlow felt the rod that he might be saved from the gallows. And so did Loty Dickinson, at whose house a similar scene with Mr. Ezra Tubbs had been enacted. Take it altogether, it was the saddest Christmas which Tommy Barlow and Loty Dickinson had ever known.

It was two days after Christmas that Tommy and Loty, coming home from the long hill where they had been trying to solace themselves with a little coasting, met small Fanny Chase. He caught hold of Tommy's jacket-sleeve and stood looking palely up at him, his face twitching.

"Say," he whispered, "I—stole 'em."

"Jack-knives?" cried Tommy and Loty together. Fanny nodded, swallowing hard.

"How, how?" gasped Tommy. "Did you get 'em into the stockings?"

"Yes," gasped Loty. "How? Oh, my!"

"Winders," replied Fanny, faintly. Then he twitched loose and ran, while a long wail floated from the depths of the poor little heart which had sinned for love.

Tommy and Loty looked at each other. "Say," said Tommy, then he stopped, but Loty nodded as if he had said something more.

"He'll have an awful time; get licked as bad as we was," said Tommy.

"Mebbe they'll put him in a gaol 'cause he's one of those Chases," said Loty.

Then the two boys looked at each other.

"It's no use," said Tommy, "we can't tell on him."

"No, we can't," said Loty.

And they did not. For a week to come the two experienced all the woes of scorn and contempt and more. People began to say that they should not be allowed to go to school, that they would remove their own children rather than have them brought in contact with such youthful depravity. Then there came a night when the school-committee, headed by the chairman, who was Uncle Thomas Barlow, who was resolved to be pitiless for the sake of justice, even when the culprit bore his own name, appeared at Tommy's father's. The three committee-men sat in an awful row in the Barlow sitting-room, and Tommy stood before them. His heart beat loud in his ears, his hands and feet were like ice. He did not know what could be coming, but he was resolved never to tell on little Fanny, come what would.

Uncle Thomas began to talk, and Tommy

listened without comprehending more than it was something awful, and that the words fell on his ears like blows. He heard his mother sob.

Then there was a knock on the door. Mr. Barlow tiptoed solemnly to open it, as if there was a funeral, and in came Fanny Chase and his mother. She was a small, nervous woman, and she was quivering all over like a wire spring. She made nothing of interrupting Uncle Thomas.

"The Chases be poor and low down," said she; "but they don't lie nor steal if I know it, without somethin' is done about it, and they don't let other folks suffer for what they did. My boy here was the one that stole them jackknives to give to them boys, 'cause they took his part agin' the other boys in the school, and he's jest come and told me about it, and asked me if I wouldn't come here and tell the committee, so Tommy and Loty shouldn't git dismissed from school. An' here he is, an' now I'll take him home an' punish him."

Then Uncle Thomas did something unexpected. He caught hold of little Fanny who was cowering before them all so pale that he looked as if he would fall, and he sat him on his magisterial knee.

"You are not going to punish this boy, madame," said he, "until we have sifted this case to the bottom."

Then between them all, they got at the curious, unbelievable, pathetic truth, that poor little Fanny had stolen the knives for the sake of his love and gratitude to his two champions, and how he had told, and Tommy and Loty had gone on bearing blame and ignominy to shield him.

"I declare," said Uncle Thomas Barlow, to the committee man nearest his own age, who was a crony of his, as they were going home after the call was ended, "I don't know but everyone of those little fellows ought to be given a sound whipping, but I know one thing —that boy of John's a smart fellow, yes he is, holding his tongue rather than have the little one blamed. He ought to have been pommelled for giving his father and mother all that trouble, he ought. But he's a smart fellow, and so is the Dickinson boy, though I guess Thomas is the leading spirit. And I know one thing, those boys are going to have those jackknives, and that little Chase boy isn't going to be let to grow up like the rest of the Chases if I can help it."

Our Drawing of "The Shipbuilder's Daughter."

Our illustration, the second of that series of beautiful drawings entitled "Longfellow's People," that we are publishing in our new volume, is taken from "The Building of the Ship." A strain of allegory playing about the sea and the ship runs through this noble song of love, and work, and patriotism. A famous master shipbuilder has been commissioned to build a goodly vessel

> "That shall laugh at all disaster,
> And with wave and whirlwind wrestle."

He promises his young apprentice, who loves his daughter, that he shall have her for bride on the day that the ship is launched on the sea. The girl is standing by her father's door, and Longfellow likens her to a "beauteous barge" "Still at rest on the sandy beach," and the youth is "The restless, seething, stormy sea."

In the account of the building of the mighty vessel, the poet continues the strain of imagery. There is an inner meaning of parable in the account given of the manner in which the ship's diverse parts are made and fashioned—its ribs of steel, its mast, sails and cordage.

At last the day comes when the ship is finished and, wedded to the ocean, sets forth on her journey.

> "Take her, O bridegroom old and gray,
> Take her to thy protecting arms,
> With all her youth and all her charms."

The wedding of the ship and the sea is celebrated on the day the other marriage takes place, that of the master's apprentice and his daughter. Together also they

> "Sail forth into the sea of life."

The last stanzas compare the ship to the "Ship of State," and contain a noble apostrophe to the United States—

> "Sail on, O Union strong and great!
> Humanity, with all its fears,
> With all the hopes of future years
> Is hanging breathless on thy fate.
> * * * * *
> Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea."

Making Toast.

OF all the flowers that bloomed in spring
there's not one left alive,
The last, last rose of summer's but a ghost,
The clock upon the chimney-piece is on the
stroke of five,
As I kneel before the fender—making toast.

Photo by Percy Wallis.

MAKING TOAST.

THE kettle sings upon
the hob—there's such
a glorious fire—
This hour, in winter
time, I love the most,
So draw the curtain closer
still—shut out the
mirk and mire—
Then cut the bread and
help me make the
toast.

THOUGH I can draw
and paint and sing—
as well as knit and
sew—
And, at a pinch, can
even boil and roast;
Can play at any sort of
game, can cycle, ride,
and row,
The thing that I excel
in's making toast

A. L. HARRIS.

Her Mother's Gown.

THE droop of silk that shimmers white
And trailing, plays with spots of light
That through a casement filter down
On Kitty in her mother's gown:
They show a dainty lady there
Of downcast eyes and tender air.

"MY mother really wore it so
Quite more than twenty years ago.
Her hair was very dark, like mine,
She parted it in simple line:
And just my height: her eyes were brown,
I ought to match my mother's gown."

SHE keeps the dress with tend'rest care,
Such pleasant mem'ries lingered there.
"I love the scent of every fold,
They tell of dearest days of old."
When love and happiness flew down
And put a stitch in mother's gown.

"ALTHOUGH I'm just as young and tall
As mother was; yet that's not all,
I'd like to have her loving mind,
So tender, wise, so dear and kind,
No fits of temper, not a frown,
Must go to match my mother's gown."

CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

Photo. by Percy Wallis. HER MOTHER'S GOWN.

Miss Alcott's Letters to her "Laurie."

EDITED BY "LAURIE" HIMSELF.

MISS ALCOTT.

A Series of Letters written by Louisa May Alcott to Alfred Whitman, whom she acknowledges in her last letter as the original of "Laurie" in her famous story of "Little Woman."

PART TWO.

IN her book Mrs. Cheney gives the name of the youngest member of the Alcott family as *Abba* May. This is perhaps the name given her, but it was never, to my knowledge, used by any member of the family. She signed her name for years "Abby," then "Abbie," and in this letter Louisa says "Ab, or *May*, as she chooses to be called." The change was recognised by her friends and family, but Louisa's letters show that she could not easily drop the name so intimately connected with her baby sister:

"Your Little Woman don't forget her Private and Particular Boy."

September 24th, 1861.

MY DEAREST DOLPHUS,—As I am sure you will be exhausted after meandering thro' Ab's topsey-turvey letter, written in the New York style, I'll not give you a very large second dose of epistle pill. You were a boy of sense not to let your angry passions rise to the boiling-over point on account of silence in your Concord correspondent, for you may always be sure your "little woman" don't forget her private and particular boy, and if she don't write it's because she can't, not because she won't, so bless you, and come on.

The notice of the "Pioneer Dramatic Association" has been promoted to a lofty perch in my theatrical Record, whose rare illustrations you may remember to have literally bedaubed with your sanguinary brush. I "set great store" by a blue-nosed Macbeth, a variegated Mrs. Barrow, and the ghost in Hamlet with his finger on his nose in that comprehensive attitude which expresses scorn, defiance and ridicule more eloquently than a flood of words.

We have been meditating plays and shall have some when the fine weather puts an end to picnics, boating and moonlight philanderings. Ab, or May, as she chooses to be called, is to be "first walking lady," the dashing or sentimental parts in riding habits or white muslin being her especial forte. I am "first old woman" and scold to my heart's content, to say nothing of improving every opportunity to slap and bang any one against whom I have a grudge. It's very refreshing to me and at such times don't offend the sufferers. I recommend it to you as a pleasant "went" for any bottled wrath or pique you may have and which would spoil by keeping.

Don't get smashed in the war, because you can't be spared by

Your loving old SOPHY.

A large instalment of these charming letters appeared in the November number.

Mr. Sanborn's school was for several years the feature of the town, and Louisa refers to him generally as "Dominie Sanborn." There have been all sorts of schools, but never one exactly like this one, and I count it one of the great privileges of my life to have been among its scholars.

"I couldn't resist the great, smooth floor."

CONCORD, Nov. 12th, 1861.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,— . . . . Now let me see what bits of news I can rake up. Concord is quiet now after two very jolly months, for the city folks are gone, the parties done, mild weather over, and F. B. S.'s scholars studying like bees to make up for lost time. A series of dances at the hall were very jovial, for only "our set" went and we felt free and easy. They were got up by Shepard, the Barretts, Bartletts and Hersey Goodwin, and were exceedingly merry and nice, for the young men were bound to have them go and spared no pains to gain their point. Abby danced herself sick, and I pegged away till the natives must have begun to fear my reason was touched in my old age, but I couldn't resist the great, smooth floor and the twankling of Ball's harp, so skipped like a lively ostrich and enjoyed myself amazingly.

Sanborn has no very pleasant new scholars, so we don't see much prospect of fun in that direction, for they are mostly young, and there are only about thirty in all. Abby teaches drawing there, and gets her class along very successfully.

"$40, to be paid if I sell my hair to do it."

In 1862, at the suggestion of Miss Peabody, Louisa opened a kindergarten in Boston. She had a room in Warren Street Chapel and began with twelve scholars, but took no great interest in it and soon gave it up. She writes in her Journal of April, 1862:

The school having no real foundation I gave it up, as I could do much better at something else. May took my place for a month, that I might keep my part of the bargain, and I cleaned house, and wrote a story which made more than all my months of teaching. They ended in a wasted winter and a debt of $40, to be paid if I sell my hair to do it.

At this time Miss Alcott wrote the following letter:

April 6th, 1862.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,—If you had been keeping a Kinder Garten all the winter and visiting about at the same time you wouldn't have found much leisure for letter writing or anything else, but tho' I didn't write I heard of you through Carrie and May, and always said, "Give Dolphus my love," but of course they forgot it, and I can't blame them.

I have been as busy as a bee with my dozen babes at Warren Street Chapel in Boston, teaching on the new plan. Miss

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Peabody and Mr. Barnard got it up, and if it wasn't hard times it would do very well.

"The boys called me 'sir,' and the girls flirted in earnest."

During a three weeks' visit at Mr. Sargent's we had a Masquerade, and while at Roxbury I helped in three evenings of plays. Then (as I suppose Carrie has told you) we had a grand Masque and March, when 400 people appeared in fine costumes and had a merry time. . . . I was a "Monk," and no one knew me even after we unmasked, for a black beard and cowl changed me into a jolly friar and made great fun. The boys called me "sir," pushed me round in the dressing-room, and asked me to tie and pin them up, supposing I was a man, and the girls flirted in earnest till I took off my beard, when they shouted. Nan didn't take a dress, and John did not come up. The costumes were fine. Shepard was splendid as Hamlet, and Frank as the Duke of Buckingham was gorgeous. I wish you had been here.

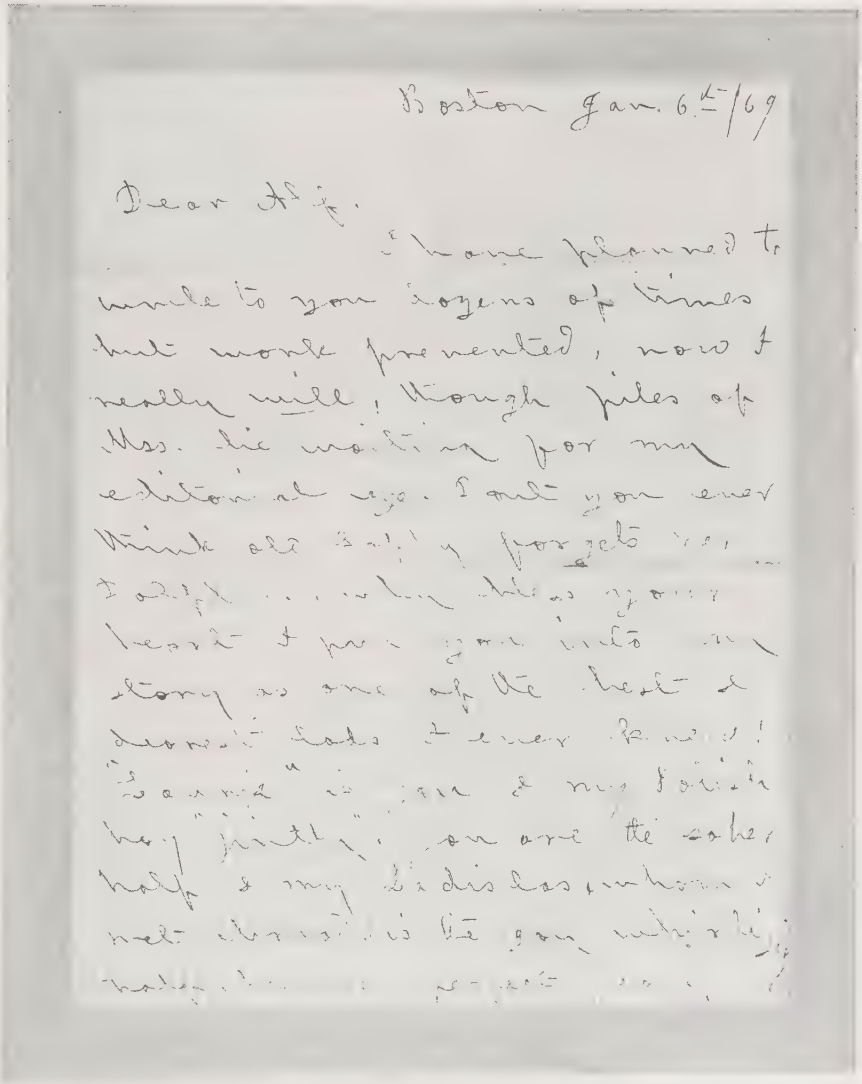
The students at Mr. Sanborn's school who loved Nature, found in Henry Thoreau an inspiration that remains with them, and will remain till they move on to join the throng invisible. He was always ready for a walk in the woods, and knew by instinct the home of every flower and plant in the region about Concord. His death was a deep loss to Concord, but he is better known and better appreciated at this time than he ever was while living.

Concord,
May 11th, 1862.

DEAREST DOLPHUS,—If I'm not prompt this time it will be the fault of the mail, not the female, for your letter came last eve, and I answer it this morning with my head in "a blauze" for fear of accidents or company which might prevent this important epistle from going to-night. I send you the first two numbers of our Concord paper, and if you or any of your friends like to subscribe we shall be glad, for we want the "Monitor" to succeed. Sanborn writes for it, also Dr. Charles Jackson and several Boston men, also Carrie, Ab and I, so "you see what a mass of talent is secured, and if only patronised how vast an influence this modest sheet may exert over the two hemispheres." . . . .

There are two more numbers out which I'll send if I can find them, and if you subscribe they will all be furnished that your numbers may be complete. I think it's safe to subscribe for six months, as it will certainly live till then if not longer. Uncle May of Syracuse has subscribed for a year, and many others. I thought it might interest you as a Concord affair. I have given all the authors' names that I know, for a deep mystery shrouds some of the writers, and it's just as well perhaps, as no one is very anxious to know who they are. . . . .

Henry Thoreau died on Tuesday, and was publicly buried from the church on Friday. Mr. Channing wrote an Ode, Mr. Emerson made an address, and Father read selections from Henry's own books, proving that though he didn't go to church he was a better Christian than many who did. A party of great people from


Boston Jan. 6th/69

Dear Sir.

I have planned to write to you dozens of times but work prevented, now I really will, though piles of Mss. lie waiting for my editorial eye. I wish you ever think of [illegible] forgive me, I do, [illegible] but [illegible] your heart I pray you into mine & keep us one of the best & dearest links I ever found! I owed it to you & my Polish boy "jointly," you are the other half & my Ladislas, whom I met there is to you what [illegible]

A FACSIMILE OF LOUISA ALCOTT'S LETTER, IN WHICH SHE WROTE "'LAURIE' IS YOU AND MY POLISH BOY 'JOINTLY.'"

Boston came up, the church was full, and though he wasn't made much of while living, he was honored at his death. . . . .

I did not write "My Garden," but a Miss Dodge, and I think it's very jolly, don't you? My garden is very much in her style, for I poke down seeds every spring, think they are weeds, pull them up and wait and wonder all the summer why they don't come up and bloom. . . . .

There is to be a school in Washington for the blacks, and if I am asked I shall go, as I like the plan.

Now, my dear old lad, good-bye for a few weeks, and when next I write I hope to send you a "speaking likeness" of

Your loving friend, SOPHY.

"My 'boys' keep writing and asking for answers."

January 2nd, 1864.

MY DEAR ALF,—I wish you a Happy New Year to begin with, and add many thanks for the picture which you so kindly sent your apparently neglectful Sophy. Your father I never saw, but mother thinks he looks very much like his brother, whom she used to know. You have grown and altered so much I can see hardly any trace of the Dolphus I used to know. But the new aspect seems to assure us that "our Alf" is every inch a man, and one we should like to see among us again. Isn't he ever coming?

I have thought so often of you, and some letter which I've an idea I never answered, that my courage grew less and less every time I prepared to write and was interrupted, that at last as I got busier and busier I gave it up in despair, though I never forgot and always asked Carrie when and what she heard from you.

My only excuse is that when publishers once get hold of a body they give that body no peace, and keep them at work like "negro mulatto slaves" all day and every day and are never satisfied. . . . . Then my correspondents multiply, and several of my Hospital friends and "boys" keep writing and asking for answers, besides business letters which arrive at the rate of two a day, if not more. You see I *do* the necessary and *think* about doing the agreeable.

Just of late we have been busy having plays at the Tremont Theatre for the Sanitary, while the great Fair was held in the Music Hall near by. We Concord people got up some scenes from Dickens as we did ages ago, you remember. I wished I had my old company, as the new one was made up of busy men and incapable women, with a few blessed exceptions. I daresay Carrie may have told you something about it, though she was not able to go. We did as well as we could, and after endless disappointments, mishaps and "flare-ups," we managed to have "Trotwood and David," "Gamp and Prig," and "Mrs. Jarley's Waxworks," and people were good enough to be pleased. . . . . All send love to you, dear Alf, and I am, as ever,

"Your SOPHY."

"'Laurie' is you and my Polish boy 'jointly.'"

As to this, the closing letter of this series, I refrain from personal comment. Perhaps it will not be amiss to quote from Mr. Frank B. Sanborn, with regard to this letter:

As for Miss Alcott's statement that "Laurie" was wholly Ladislas—that must have been to escape annoying hints and questions, for it was obvious from the first that no Polish lad could have sat for the distinctly American traits in that composite and glorious human boy. Concord people have always felt that the Polish boy was not the sole original, and they have tried to guess who the other person really was. This letter solves the mystery, for, written when the book was fresh, it tells the evident truth.

F. B. SANBORN.

This is the letter:

Boston, Jan. 6th, '69.

DEAR ALF,—I have planned to write to you dozens of times but work prevented, now I really *will*, though piles of MSS. lie waiting for my editorial eye. Don't you ever think old Sophy forgets her Dolphus! Why bless your heart, I put you into my story as one of the best and dearest lads I ever knew! "Laurie" is you and my Polish boy "jointly." You are the sober half, and my Ladislas (whom I met abroad) is the gay, whirligig half; he was a perfect dear.

"My little girl friends insist on a sequel."

All my little girl friends are madly in love with "Laurie" and, insist on a sequel, so I've written one which will make you laugh, especially the pairing-off part. But I didn't know how to settle my family any other way. I wanted to disappoint the young gossips who vowed that "Laurie" and I *should* marry. Authors take dreadful liberties, but you won't mind being a happy spouse and a proud papa, will you?

. . . . If anything in those old times does you good and makes their memory sweet I am truly glad, for it gives an added charm to home to go halves in it with some one who hasn't got any, and I should very much like to find another Alf to fill the empty place there, if that was possible.

I'm fond of boys, as you may have discovered; I always want one somewhere handy, so, as you say you haven't grown up (which is a great comfort to me) I wish you'd come East and be our Alf again, if Mrs. Mary don't object.

Good-bye, my dear boy, write to me and you shall truly get an answer from

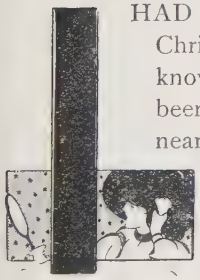
Your ever-loving old

SOPHY.

THE ROMANCE OF A GATE.

By "LAVENDER."

Illustrated by BERTHA NEWCOMBE.



I HAD been looking forward to our Christmas for a long while, and I know Nanny had, for we had been at school at Fontainebleau nearly a year, without a break, and now father had just written to us that he could not join us and take us to Paris for Christmas, as he had intended, because his leave would not begin till February. So he thought it best that we should accept our Great-aunt Martha's invitation to the Grange at King's Norton. At first we were bitterly disappointed, for we were very fond of father. He was the best of companions though he was somewhere about fifty, and we thought that very old, and wondered that he could be so jolly and full of fun after all he had been through. He had often told us about our aunts in England, especially Aunt Tabitha, and we felt sure that, in spite of our disappointment, we should enjoy ourselves, for life looked very pleasant to us at sixteen and seventeen, and to spend Christmas in a Grange seemed so romantic, especially if there was a moat.

Nanny was sixteen, but she never seemed to me to be younger than I was. I always looked up to her. She was so independent, had such a ready tongue, though she was no chatterer, and such a humorous appreciation of people. She was always rapping out odd opinions which made people stop their conversation and look at her. Very good, too, she was to look upon, and when we arrived I saw that Aunt Tabitha was quite startled by her appearance, and as for Aunt Martha, after greeting me in quite an ordinary fashion, she took Nanny's two hands in hers, and drawing her towards her, gave her a severe kiss on the cheek.

"Welcome back, my dear," she said with a queer little choke in her voice, and I saw Aunt

Tabitha look quite frightened and her hands trembled so that she could hardly make the tea without spilling it out of the tea-caddy.

As for Nanny, she grimaced at me at first over Aunt Martha's shoulder as she felt the rather bristly chin against her cheek; then I saw her give one of her understanding looks, and she returned the kiss and I knew that Aunt Martha had found favour.

But I must tell how horribly disappointed we were in "The Grange." It had no moat. It had nothing romantic about it. It was a hideous modern house, and when we got to our bedroom to take off our things, Nanny sat on the floor in despair, and I flung myself on a hideous green rep sofa with a curly back and we looked at one another and groaned.

"Serves us right for being such romantic ninnies," said Nanny.

"But I am sure father talked about Aunt Tabitha's house as if it were perfection, and father *knew*. He would ramble on about the old-world feeling it had and how Aunt Tabitha looked as if she had never changed for fifty years, and yet, Nanny, he must have seen this place."

"That is so like father. He never talks about, nor dwells upon, anything he does not like: that's why he never told us."

"What *did* happen do you think, Nanny? Were all the old things sold when Aunt Tabitha moved to the Grange?"

"Goodness knows," said Nanny with a face of gloom, then turning round to her box, she began to unpack.

"I'm not going to think any more about it," she said, "I'm going to enjoy my Christmas even in that fearful drawing-room, and I'm going to have some fun with that prickly Aunt Martha. I like her. She's so alive, and so convinced about things. Did you hear how decided she was about everything, while Aunt Tabitha was fluttering about in a whirl of doubt? Of course, if I wanted a real good cry, I should put my head in Aunt Tabitha's lap and enjoy it, but if I wanted to get over it, I am almost sure I should go to Aunt Martha. Come, Mary, let's be cheerful as long as we can, though we *are* in a dreadful stucco house with a portico."

So we dressed for dinner and did our hair. We were very particular about our hair, I suppose because we had lived abroad. We never scrabbled it up anyhow like many English girls, but really dressed it. Mine grew in an arched line over a forehead not too high, and I always rolled it back as if over a cushion, and then coiled and twisted it from the top of my head to the nape of my neck. I was rather proud of my hair. There was less of Nanny's; she parted it over her wide forehead and just when it reached the temples it began to wave and crinkle and to get loose into distracting little curls which no amount of brushing would straighten. The rest she drew to the top of her head into a soft, loose knot.

We went downstairs and were soon at dinner at a massive table loaded with heavy silver and a thing called an *épergne* in the middle, filled with Christmas roses, maidenhair fern, and a bit of holly here and there. I am sure the solid butler had arranged it and thought it seasonable At the end of a room hung a full length portrait of Aunt Martha's defunct husband. She introduced us to him cheerfully.

"That was Mr. Crump, my dears, your great-uncle by marriage—a very worthy man, as no doubt you know. He was twice Mayor of King's Norton, and that portrait of him with his chain of office was presented to him by the Corporation. He was much respected, and he built this house when he retired from business." (I saw Aunt Tabitha give a little shudder.) "Now, don't cower like that, Tabitha, I know what I am talking about, and there is nothing to be ashamed of. I loved my husband, and I admired his energy, and I was thankful when he married me, though I had not been accustomed to think of him as one of our associates. If you're the sensible girls I take you for, you'll agree with me that it is much better to make yourself happy with second best if you can't get best, and that it's no use crying over lost glories."

Here Nanny struck in. I saw she meant to play up to Aunt Martha.

"What *was* Uncle Crump, Aunt Martha?"

"He was a corn and flour merchant, my dear."

"Almost wholesale," murmured Tabitha.

"Not a bit of it!" retorted Aunt Martha.

"GRANDFATHER CAME FORWARD, AND JUST AS MARTHA REACHED THE LAST STAIR HE MADE A LEG, AND BOWING LOW KISSED HER HAND."—(*p.* 112.)

"Retail, Tabby; retail quite as much as wholesale. You could buy a pound of flour, or a hundredweight of coal, or a pennyworth of mustard and cress."

"How jolly!" said Nanny. "Were there sacks of maize, and oats, and little drawers of seeds behind the counter? I used to have a shop for a toy when I was a little girl, and *that* was a corn dealer's, and I always so wanted to see a real one with drawers and sacks just like mine. Have you got the shop now, Aunt Martha?"

"Oh! my dear," said Aunt Tabitha, deprecatingly.

"No," said Aunt Martha, "and I can't say I regret it, for I could not have managed it. Young women in my days were not trained for occupations or professions. I hope you two are being brought up differently. You, Anne, seem a thoroughly common-sense girl."

"I am, Aunt Martha, I am!"

"Nanny, how can you?" I cried.

"I like common sense," said Aunt Martha, looking at me severely. "It is the most essential thing in life."

"Ah!" said Nanny, with her most ingenuous air, "that's just the curse of it. I know it to be so essential, and I know that I have such a thick stratum of it in my character. But what I should really like would be the uncommon sense. A little garden of a character with light soil, where all sorts of fancies that you would call weeds or unnecessary flowers might flourish. I wonder whether it would grow over a solid stratum of common-sense. I really believe I could get on better without the essential than without the superfluous."

Aunt Martha sat up rather stiffly.

"That's French," she said, "and it smacks of sentiment. If there is a thing I abhor it's a Frenchified sentiment."

"I adore sentiment," cried Nanny, "don't you, Aunt Tabitha?"

"Tabitha was always a little fool," said Aunt Martha. "I look for better things of you, my dear; you are young and will gain experience. Let us go to the drawing-room. I have not a grain of sentiment in my character, I flatter myself."

"That I am sure you do, Aunt Martha," said Nanny, slipping her arm confidingly into the old lady's, and looking from under her curls with a twinkle in her brown eyes.

And Aunt Martha twinkled back—

"You impudent little hussy," she said softly.

PART II.

The next day was Christmas Eve, and a bleak snowy day, just what we should have liked in the Grange of our imagination. But the plate-glass windows of our reality looked on to a smooth slope of snow-covered lawn, out of which bristled the spikes of several yuccas; and a huge Auracaria waved its prickly arms in a see-saw fashion against the white sky. Several symmetrically grown conifers, held in their places by long wires pegged into the grass, and which had been an especial pride of the late Mr. Crump, completed the dreariness of the scene. Indoors, however, Aunt Martha kept us cheerful. She promised us several festivities and to take us up to London, perhaps to the theatre or to some concert, but she discouraged all attempts on our part to talk about family history or old associates. She and Aunt Tabitha had quite a little skirmish when tea was brought in, about some evergreens, which the butler announced.

"I'll have no nonsense of that sort," she said, "spoiling my wall-papers and picture frames. Let them go into the kitchen for the maids. They can have them if they like."

"You can save me just a few, John, for my room," said Aunt Tabitha, "just leave them at the foot of the stairs."

"Such silliness," said Aunt Martha, quite crossly. "For my part I'm always glad when Christmas and all its foolishness is over. Did you want holly and mistletoe, children?" she said suddenly with a little misgiving.

"We'll go and help Aunt Tabitha put up hers," we answered politely; and leaving Aunt Martha rather gloomy with her daily paper which had arrived by the afternoon post, we followed Aunt Tabitha to her room. She was a little flustered by so much attention, and apologised for keeping us waiting while she lit the candles, and then turned shyly towards us as if expecting the exclamations of delight which burst from us.

"Oh, Aunt Tabitha! Why, this is what we expected and hoped for! This is what father told us about! What lovely old things—what chairs!—what tables!—what china! Is that your sampler? Father told us about that, too. How beautifully you worked it! Please tell us about your old home. How you must have hated to leave it and to come to this hideous house."

"Hush, my dears!" said Aunt Tabby, "I could not keep the old place, and very thankful I was when Martha asked me to come here. I had to sell a great many of our most valuable possessions. There was no room for them here, but I kept what I could, and I have been able to furnish these two rooms which Martha kindly allows me to arrange as I like. Come near the fire, my dears. Christmas Eve is a sad and sacred anniversary for me, but the sight of you two on my hearth seems right and fit, and I can rejoice in the present even when thinking of the sad past."

"Won't you tell us about it?" said Nanny. "Now we feel at home, and of the family, and the family griefs and joys should be ours too." Aunt Tabitha paused a moment. Then she said:

"Every Christmas Eve I open that carved oak chest which is behind you, Nanny, and I take from under their covers what are to me the most precious relics of our family. Not only have they been preserved for generations, but they are associated with every sentiment and memory that I hold most dear. I have often wondered whether Martha can have forgotten or whether she only wishes to forget. But yesterday, when she welcomed you, Nanny, I saw that the sight of you recalled her youth."

"I supposed so, Aunt Tabitha. What is it? Am I like father's mother?"

"Yes, my child, our dear sister. How fond we were of her! And you are like in face and ways. She died very young, in India, soon after the birth of your father, fifty years ago." Here she paused. "My dears, to-night it shall be for you to lift the lid of that chest, and to take from their wrappings my old treasures."

We got up, a little awestruck, and opened the heavy old oak chest. A delicious spicy smell was wafted up, and tremblingly we put aside a soft piece of old linen, and lifted out the contents before the fire. The candles illuminated dimly my armful, and Aunt Tabitha, advancing with some solemnity, took it from me and spread it out before my eyes. It was a dress of splendid brocade, stiff and rustling, broad, satiny stripes alternating with thick ribbed silk, and spaced with large bunches of flowers of every shade of pink. The body was of the quaint pointed form of the 18th century, and the elbow sleeves were finished with folds of silk dotted with little knots of pink ribbon. She hung it over a chair, and a quilted, rose-coloured satin petticoat by its side.

"Now, Nanny, give me yours."

Nanny had already spread out her light burden, and was gazing at it rapturously. It was a little dress of the very softest Indian muslin, worn over a satin slip. The skirt was very narrow, and round the bottom were vandykes of lace insertion. The body was about three inches long, and the square bosom was bordered with lace, as were also the short, full sleeves.

"How funny, Aunt Tabitha! Fancy wearing such a dress! How I should like to put it on."

"You shall, my dear, very soon, but put it near the fire. It may be damp after lying all the year in the chest. Come a little closer and you shall hear the tale of those dresses—one tale, at least, for doubtless they have their own secrets, of which I know nothing.

"Sixty years ago to-night, on Christmas Eve, your Aunt Martha, your grandmother, and I were three happy young girls, as full of spirits and fun as either of you can be. We lived in the old house you have heard your father talk of, and which I left with so much grief. A dear old place it was: shabby, though, for we were very poor. It belonged to our grandfather, who had taken us three orphans to live with him when we were quite babies. He loved us with the greatest tenderness, and we simply worshipped him. I have never seen another man like him, though your father, my dears, has many of his most endearing ways. He was cheerful and humourous, and most gentle in his manners, devoted to his little estate and possessions, proud of his name and family, but with the common-sense view of life that Martha has, and which I, my dears, lack, I

know. If there was anyone whom our grandfather loved above all others (and he tried in vain to hide it lest he should hurt the feelings of Martha and myself) it was your grandmother, Penelope Woodhouse. He need not have tried to keep it from us, dear old man, for we adored her too. She was so bright, so sweet-tempered, and so clever; so helpful to grandfather, for she knew all the tenants on the diminished estate, their wants, their wishes, and their shortcomings, and she was quite a thrifty little bailiff and grandfather's right hand in everything. We led a quiet enough life. Martha was housekeeper, and I at fifteen was still doing lessons under grandfather's care every morning in his study. How we used to love that room! It was lined with old books (I have kept a few of them) from floor to ceiling, except on one side where a fine piece of Jacobean panelling divided it from the old hall with its wide staircase. The study had once been part of the hall and contained the old fireplace, which was so big that as children we used to get right inside it, and sit beside the burning logs, while grandfather would tell us stories of his youth when he made the grand tour, and came back through Paris just after the taking of the Bastille. Very, very seldom he spoke of my grandmother, and when he did, it was generally after Penelope had been chattering in her brilliant way. When we begged him to tell us more about her, he would put up his hands and say, 'Let that be, let that be, my dears, you can look at that picture there above the mantelpiece.' And there it always hung, a beautiful little miniature by Cosway, so like Penelope, and here it is now, my dears. But for the difference of dress, one might think that Nanny had sat for it.

"But those days came to an end, and in the sudden way that I am going to tell you about, just sixty years ago.

"There had lately come into the neighbourhood a family named Baskerville—your family, my dears, and you must go and see your relations. We became very intimate, for there were several girls, and they were happy-go-lucky sort of people, who had come into an estate even more dilapidated than ours. Nothing would please them but they must have a fancy dress ball on Christmas Eve, for they had found some old costumes in their house, and their only brother was to be back from India, and they must invite the neighbourhood.

"At first grandfather was a little unwilling that the invitation should be accepted.

"'How can you girls get together enough finery? I cannot send you out as is seemly for my granddaughters—besides, Tabitha is too young.' 'They haven't asked me, grandfather,' I sobbed. 'That's the only thing against our going,' said Penelope; 'we have found some dresses in the old oak chest, but poor Tabby—'

"'Well, well,' said grandfather, 'if you can arrange your finery, you can go. Tabby must stay at home with her granddad and we will find some other treat for her.'

"So on Christmas Eve there was a fine dressing in our big bedroom. We determined we would be recklessly extravagant for once, so we had a big fire and no less than eight candles disposed about the room. Martha was to wear the flowered silk you see there, and what work we had to powder her hair and to roll it up; somewhat as yours is done now, Mary. We got the flour-dredger from cook, and what with pomade and flour, and rouge and powder, Martha looked as handsome a beauty as ever ruled over Bath or Tunbridge. Then came Penelope's turn, and her slim little person was soon arrayed in that dress you have taken out of the chest. How closely it fitted to her pretty figure, and how it showed off her round arms and dimpled shoulders! Her brown eyes looked from under her curls just as yours do now, Nanny. Martha was all impatience to get off, for they had to be early, having no chaperon, and she was sweeping about the room, fanning herself with the little painted fan and admiring her pretty feet in the silver brocaded shoes. So, leaving Penelope to practise the right way of draping her shawl, I took the candle and lighted Martha down the polished stairs. When nearly at the bottom, we called impatiently for granddad, and he opened the door of his study and came out. How his old face lighted up with pleasure! and a dear old figure he looked himself, for he still kept to an old style of dress. He came forward to the staircase and just as Martha reached the

"GRANDFATHER WENT WHITE AS A SHEET WHEN HE SAW PENELOPE."—(*p.* 114.)

last stair he made a leg, and bowing low he kissed her hand. Martha was delighted, and stepping down she made him a sweeping curtsey, saying, 'You are vastly polite, I am sure, sir.'

"But just at this moment Penelope ran lightly down the staircase, and coming up behind grandfather, she touched his arm and said, 'And what greeting for me, I wonder?' Grandfather went white as a sheet when he saw her, and with shaking hands he took both hers in his and laid his poor old head on her pretty shoulders. 'My dear, my dearest love, he whispered, and then we heard the sound of a sob. We all stood quite still, scared to death. Martha, for all her strong ways, leant hard on me and my hand shook so that I could hardly hold my candle.

"Then I saw that Penelope had got her arm under grandfather's shoulder, and had raised his head.

"'What is it, granddad?' she said, 'what have I done? Surely you know it's I, Penelope. Grandfather leaned against the post at the foot of the stairs.

"'Children,' he said, in a rather broken voice, 'I am an old fool, but you gave me a shock. Penelope, my darling, come here. You could not know, my dear, but that was your grandmother's dress, the pretty dress she wore when I first met her at the ball at King's Norton, near by. You have often asked me to tell you about her, but there is not much to tell. She died at the birth of your dear father. Now go to your pleasure, my dears, and forget my foolishness.'

"'How can I forgive myself for being so thoughtless?' cried Penelope. 'Let me stay at home, granddad, you are still weak and trembling.'

"'No my dear, no, Tabby will stay with me. 'Tis I that cannot forgive myself.' So they went, but unwillingly, and I stayed with grandfather. He tried to be cheerful and to talk of things we loved, but every now and then he fell into a reverie and forgot about me. He seemed uneasy too, but, child as I was, I did not understand, and let him send me to bed while he waited for the girls to come back.

"And it was a sad home-coming, for they found him dead, my dears, with his head on the table and his hand clasping the little miniature. Penelope was almost beside herself with grief, crying out that it was her fault. She was ill for some months after, and when she came down, it was to a lonely, dreary hearth. It was not till two or three years later that she married your grandfather, who had fallen in love with her at the ball. He took her out to India, and we never saw her again."

Nanny and I sat quite still as Aunt Tabitha wiped her eyes. All we could do was just to press her hand with sympathy.

But Aunt Tabitha soon cheered up again.

"Now, my dears," she said, "you know the little family story, and I want you to put on the dresses, just for the pleasure it will give me to see them on your young shoulders this Christmas eve. You will just have time before dinner."

So with a joyful trepidation and curiosity we dressed ourselves in the old gowns.

Nanny looked just like the old miniature that Aunt Tabitha held in her hand.

We were by the fire, and talking low and laughing gently, when we heard the rustling of a stiff silk outside the door.

Aunt Tabitha grasped my arm.

"It's your Aunt Martha," she whispered, "what shall we do?"

"Nothing," said Nanny, "she is coming in. Let her see us."

"Tabitha," said Aunt Martha, "what have you done with those children? Good Heavens!" Aunt Martha paused in the middle of the room, and looked me up and down. I felt ready to sink into the earth, but Aunt Tabitha drew me to her side. At the same time Nanny rose from her knees before the fire.

"Martha," said Tabitha, "it is Christmas Eve; don't be angry. I always take out these dresses for remembrance, and to-night——

But Aunt Martha was not attending to her. She was looking straight at Nanny, who confronted her, with the same little understanding look that I had seen before.

"Penelope," said Aunt Martha.

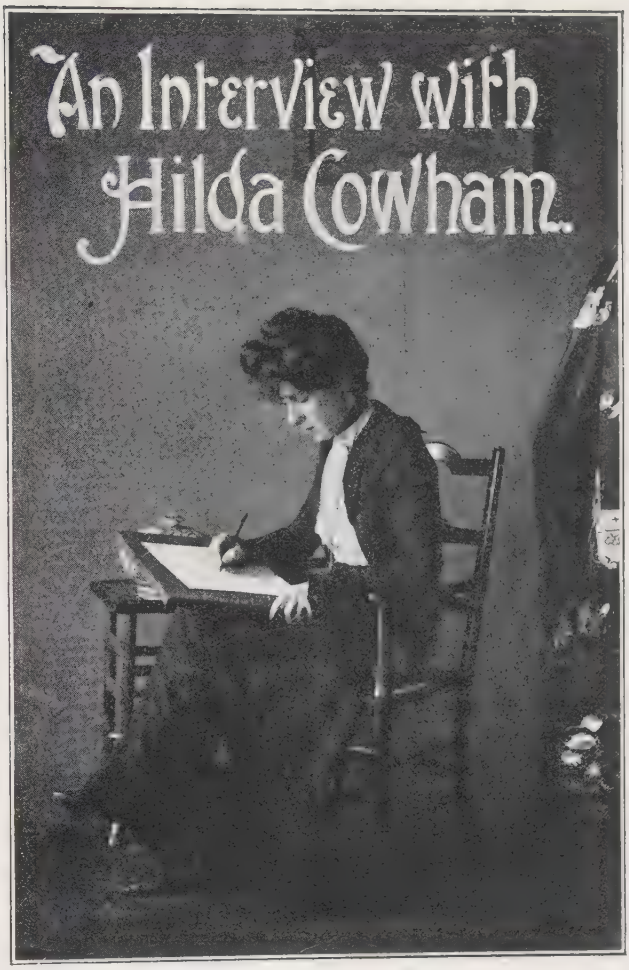
"No," said Nanny, "and she went up to her and laid her cheek against the bristly old face, "it's Nanny. Ah! Aunt Martha dear, you *did* flatter yourself, didn't you?"

How I Began

An Interview with Hilda Cowham.

By EDITH YOUNG.

Hilda Cowham has illustrated for her favourite public of girls the seven ages of her life from Babyhood to Success.



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HILDA COWHAM (MRS. EDGAR LANDER) AT WORK ON AN ILLUSTRATION FOR THIS MAGAZINE.

Little ladies of roguish eyes, smiles of boys alive with mischief, certain wise and demure kittens, a wonderland of toys and dolls, pictures of serious people, visions of fun and cleverness—it is a pageant of entertainment and delightfulness fixed on our memories by the art of that artist in black and white illustration, Hilda Cowham.

And yet, only a few years ago, there were none of these special visions; no little ladies of that particular type, certainly not many boys so determinedly mischievous. Hilda Cowham's reputation was laid by her first published drawings of some four or five years ago. She has remained since, perhaps, the only lady artist in her particular line of work who combines artistic ability with a dainty sense of real humour. Her drawings are stereotyped doubtless by their originality; if Hilda Cowham has any standard of comparison to fear, it is her own. The artist herself, better than her drawings—which suggest long practice—through her own personality demonstrates how quickly and surely success attended her career. She is young, quite young enough to tell all about her first accepted drawings without any effort of memory. In her studio, she is surrounded by them, dainty-coloured things framed on the walls, else bound in their black and white reproductions in books. It is but a step from her student days to the present time, when her work is recognised amongst the best in modern illustration. From her student days, too, dates her acquaintance with her husband, Mr. Edgar Lander, himself an artist in black and white. Before her marriage, however, Hilda Cowham had already made her name in her profession, so that although in private one meets Mrs. Lander, her drawings are still signed and known as the works of Hilda Cowham.

Dainty and piquante in her personality, with dark artist's eyes, a wave of hair let low on a white forehead, bright colouring, and a certain expressive gracefulness in her way of doing things, Hilda Cowham has the talent of being

picturesque outside and beyond her talents as a draughtswoman. With that pleasantest of all backgrounds, a studio, where a clear diffused light falls on low couches, where dim, grey walls are lit by drawings in pencil and in colour, and rare beads hang high on screens; a figure in Japanese armour mounting guard in a wide recess of books and cabinet and pictures; I heard how success had attended Hilda Cowham.

"I cannot tell you how I began to draw, for I never remember beginning at all. I always drew. When I was a child I used to make pictures of everything. I drew ships, I remember, with long reflections shining down into the sea. I stuck them up on a mantel-shelf, and gazed at them. At that time I thought they were the most beautiful things in the world."

"MYSELF IN THE CONTEMPLATIVE AGE."
From a drawing by HILDA COWHAM.

It is a comfort to some of us, no doubt, to know that Hilda Cowham, according to her own confession, was never clever at school. With the exception of the drawing prize, which she always took, her school days went past unrewarded. But she never escaped a quick reputation for drawing. A girl at school who can draw pictures in a deft and clever way, is quite as sure of an adoring following as the girl who knows how to string fairy tales in the odd hours. Hilda Cowham's school books were covered with pencilings, the fly-leaf used up for sketches. In spite of these confessions of unrewarded school days, she must always have been quick-witted and observing. For her later and maturer work shows a clear sight regarding details, which is quite separated from a mere talent for drawing. She studied art first in the Wimbledon Art School. Then later, she went to the Lambeth School of Art, where she held a County Council Scholarship which lasted for two years.

"MYSELF IN THE COAL AGE."
From a drawing by HILDA COWHAM

As to her first published work. "I was very fortunate at the start," said Mrs. Lander. It was a remark one would have to make objection to. Where real talent and a capacity for hard work are concerned, good or ill-luck have neither much consequence nor weight. A prize was offered by *The Studio*, for a drawing in black and white. Hilda Cowham competed, and her drawing was accepted as the best. On its appearance in *The Studio*, the Editor of *The Queen* wrote to Miss Cowham, asking her to do a page drawing for that paper. Not long afterwards, Mr. Clement Shorter, on seeing her work, gave Miss Cowham a commission for a full page drawing in the *Sketch*. In the space of a few weeks, therefore, Miss Hilda Cowham had been recognised by three very important papers.

"There is so much in seizing one's opportunities," she said, "I have always endeavoured never to neglect mine."

But to an onlooker there is another reason besides for the immediate success of Hilda Cowham. These drawings struck a new note, something quaint and original which had neither been taught in schools nor acquired by diligent study. Even the most inhuman editor cannot help being affected by originality.

"I have always worked hard, partly for the reason that I love my work, and am never quite so happy as when I am at it. I do not know

when I first thought of working as I do now. I think I always wanted to. Of course I have trained myself specially for it."

That talent for observation which is so necessary for illustrative work, Hilda Cowham would have most carefully cherished.

"So many people go about without observing things at all. One may lose a point so easily by not being on the alert," she remarked seriously.

I was reminded of the gentleman who declared of a certain picture that it was not like nature, until he discovered by an awakened observation that nature was like the picture. An artist's fortune, it undoubtedly seems to be, is to find effects of light and shade, little extravagances and exaggerations of action which continually escape the untrained eye of an ordinary person. He may also create a type of his own finer than the models he uses. Mr. Gibson, the American artist, for instance, has created a type of American girl too uniformly thoughtful and stately to be exactly typical of that bright and fascinating personage.

When we see an American girl who approaches his ideal, we pay her the greatest compliment when we say she is like a Gibson girl.

"Myself in the age of learning
From a drawing by Hilda Cowham.

When we see Hilda Cowham's girls in pictures with little thin black feet, a shock of curls, and cunning eyes, we may smile over the humour of the drawing, and possibly declare that, all the same, little girls are not made like

"Myself in the budding art age."
From a drawing by Hilda Cowham.

that. And then, probably, a minute afterwards, we see children playing on the sands, or whisking about at a game, laughing and larking, and enjoying themselves; and we are quite enlightened. "It is a Hilda Cowham picture," we exclaim.

Her typical people are creations of her own in this respect. She imbues them with a spirit of fun, or fear, or mischief, as she wants to, but they are all her people. She detects exaggerations until she reaches the laughter-provoking field of caricature; she jokes through her art as other people split jokes with words. Yet her work is based on a constant observation of life.

"I never work from the model," she told me. "I go about and observe everything which I possibly can observe. If it is something definite and important I take notes on the spot when it is possible to do so. But I rely a great deal besides on my memory. For the memory can be trained just as readily as the eye can be trained. I have always believed in that, and have trained myself accordingly."

Besides this observation of life the drawings

of Hilda Cowham suggest a quick sympathy with the quaint conceits, comical or serious thoughts of children, and even grown people, which so often remain unexpressed in any form whatever. Where most people dream dreams, and as soon forget them, Hilda Cowham either understands or remembers, and in a few pen strokes expresses them for us. The boy who swaggers as a man, the girl who would be grown up at seven—all the dear dreams, and the sweet nonsense we thought of when we were children, she remembers. How perfectly life-like her dolls appear in "The Dolls' Tea Party," of the September GIRL'S REALM, and was not that just exactly how we longed to order about a toy, but yet a *real* footman in the days gone by!

The work of Hilda Cowham must have had many tributes paid to it, but probably none would please her more than one which came to her from very nearly the ends of the earth as it must have seemed. For some time her drawings appeared regularly in *Pick-me-Up*, when that paper was under the direction of Mr. Girdlestone. During the Chitral expedition of a few years ago a company of English soldiers were marching along by the North-West frontier of India. One of them, on turning over a stone, discovered a book in Hindoostanee. On looking at it, a drawing by Hilda Cowham, cut out of *Pick-me-Up*, and lettered at the corners by sentences in Hindostanee, was found pasted into the cover. The soldier preserved the book and, later, sent it to Messrs. Pearson, who keep it now as a curiosity. Who had possessed it originally, or how it came to the spot where it had been found, no one knows. Certain it is, however, that great value was attached to the drawing inside.

I have spoken of Hilda Cowham's talent for caricature. It is probable she is best known by her most humorous drawings. Throughout the principal magazines of the day her work besides of dainty tailpieces, of clever headings, is to be observed. It is never dull; always so cleanly cut, so decisive as to be Hilda Cowham's and no other. It is a threatened mannerism, this clean, quick work, and one might predict monotony if it were not for her later work of story illustration, which breaks away from many of her own traditions. Readers of THE GIRL'S REALM who remember her illustrations to the play "The Night of a Hundred Years," will hardly recognise the same hand which jokes over the seven ages of Hilda Cowham in humorous illustration of the present article. The babies and children, then the grown up Miss Cowham delivering her first sketches at the dreaded Editor's offices, are all the Hilda Cowham pictures we know so well. But these illustrations to Miss Fillippi's play demonstrated a side to her talent which has seldom been shown at all in any of her previous work.

All Hilda Cowham's work has the effect of sure and rapid draughtsmanship.

"I work very rapidly," she told me, "though I may sometimes take a long time to think out a drawing. At other times my ideas crowd on me, and I can go on for hours drawing rapidly and easily."

"I work often for a whole day at a time, quite often into the night time. But one has to be careful when these moods are on one. It is so easy to go on longer than one ought to.

"I work a great deal in colour. It is a relief to the eye after much black and white. But, of course, it is seldom reproduced in that way."

Colour lends a vivid interest to work of this sort, and it seems a pity we cannot always see the originals of the magazine drawings that appear.

"And it makes such a difference to me," Mrs. Lander went on, "when I get a free hand to work as I choose. Some

"MYSELF IN THE AGE OF REBELLION."
From a drawing by HILDA COWHAM.

editors make restrictions as to method—ask for wash when I should prefer to do it otherwise, or for pen work when I want wash."

Probably no one but an artist in black and white knows of the griefs that lie in the way where reproduction is concerned. So much of the craft of reproduction in this country lies in the hands of mechanics, where artists should be employed.

"MYSELF IN THE AGE OF DISCIPLINE."
From a drawing by Hilda Cowham.

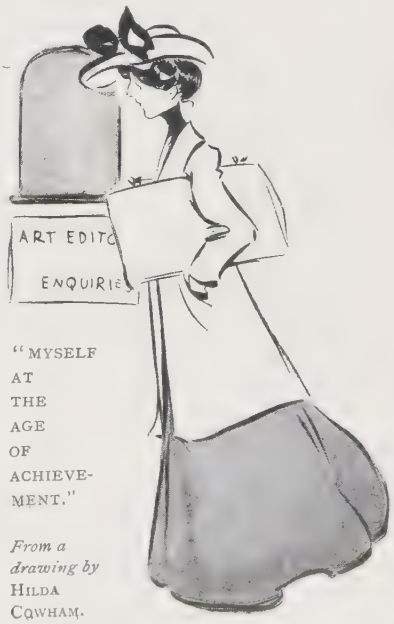
"Where magazine editors employ an artist for their process work, it is a joy to prepare drawings for them," Mrs. Lander remarked. "One or two take the greatest care—actually have their own machinery in the country where no speck of dust may mar the reproduction. With others, of course, it is often a matter of pure luck how one's drawings will appear. A line becomes coarsened or blurred, and an expression is altered. It is very disappointing."

Mrs. Lander showed me some of her well-remembered work in the *Pall Mall Magazine*, where something like the perfection of reproduction is reached.

These drawings represent one or two specimens of her finest and most finished work. The most important are full page illustrations of some of her own ideas. It must be conceded that Hilda Cowham's talent for supplying her own motives has helped her to a unique position. It, probably, too, has forced her into a special groove of work. She is already placed as regards her reputation for her clever caricatures, her humorous sketches. Yet from her very recent work of story illustration, one may predict a future for a new Hilda Cowham.

The great secret of her success up to the present is undoubtedly evident. Hilda Cowham places her work before everything. Her life and surroundings are all part of it. Her childhood led up to it, as surely as though she had spent all her days in an art school. Girls who hope they have a talent for drawing and mean to make something of it should not forget these things as demonstrated in the work of Hilda Cowham, and in this short sketch of how she began.

The triumphs of her first published drawings in her student days were possible because of all these pencilings of hers in school books and child pictures of long before. Since they showed a new and quaint insight into the odd little ways of people they commanded an instant success. If Hilda Cowham had spent her time in making copies of Ophelias, so easy to draw because of the draperies, of the flowers which may cover such awkward things as hands and ears, she would have gone the ways of most talented young ladies, and this article would never have been written. But in her very childhood she cultivated her special gift for noting expression and action, and now that she has established herself as an artist she cultivates it more assiduously than ever. The world is her model, and her quick eye never fails to detect its interesting and oddest phases. She remembers and notes on every smallest occasion,



"MYSELF AT THE AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT."

From a drawing by Hilda Cowham.

and has acquired the special gift of being able to establish her impressions without the addition of a single unnecessary line. Only the people who try to draw, and who draw a great deal, know what supreme art is required for such simple and immediate expression, what a very broad difference must be admitted between ordinary and distinctive work.

That Hilda Cowham's art is both distinctive and unique, is a tribute, not only to great natural gifts, but to her constant diligence and enthusiasm.

"I love my work, and I love to work hard," was her most insistent remark. And at no time does she allow a point to slip past, an effect be forgotten, which might help towards the perfecting of her talents. If it is good fortune which provides the artistic instinct in any one person, it is the addition of a clear insight into the up-to-date things of life, a wise all-round equipment in the necessary details of training, and a never-ceasing vigilance and enthusiasm where work is concerned, that is responsible for such drawings of distinction as those of Hilda Cowham.

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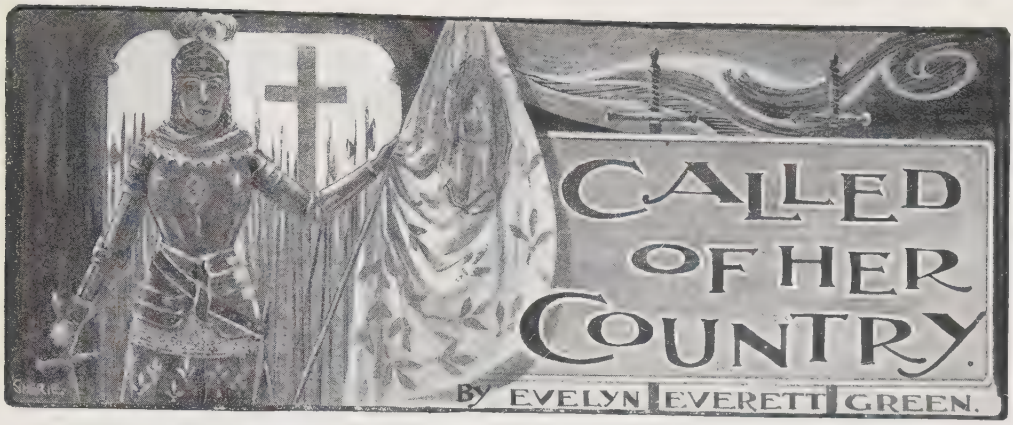
A CORNER OF HILDA COWHAM'S STUDIO IN CHELSEA.



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE MAID WAS TRIED AND TESTED.

I HAD myself proposed the test, and yet when the moment came I was ashamed of myself. The Abbé had put on his robes and his stole; a vessel containing holy water stood before him on the table; the book of the Blessed Gospels was in his hands, a boy with a taper stood at his side. The place was the hall of the Castle, and the Governor with a few of those most in his confidence stood by to see what would follow. I was at his right hand.

Bertrand brought in the Maid. I know not what he had said to her, or whether he had prepared her for what was about to take place; but however that may have been, her face wore that calm and lofty serenity of expression which seemed to belong to her. As she approached she made a lowly reverence to the priest, and stood before him where Bertrand placed her, looking at him with earnest shining eyes.

"My daughter," spoke the Abbé gravely, "have you security in your heart that the visions and voices sent to you come of good and not of evil? Many men and women have, ere this, been deceived—yea, even the holy Saints themselves have been tempted of the Devil, that old serpent, who is the great deceiver of the hearts and spirits of men. Are you well assured in your heart that you are not thus deceived and led away by whispers and suggestions from the father of lies?"

There was no anger in her face, but a beautiful look of reverent, yet joyful confidence and peace.

"I am well assured, my father, that it is my Lord who speaks to me through His most holy and blessed Saints, and through the ever-glorious Archangel Michael."

"And yet, my daughter, you know that it is written in the Holy Scriptures that the Devil can transform himself into an angel of light."

"Truly that is so, my father; but is it not also written that those who put their trust in the Lord shall never be confounded?"

"Yes, my daughter; and I pray God you may not be confounded; but it is my duty to try and test the spirits, so as to be a rock of defence to those beneath my care. Yet if things be with you as you say, you will have no fear."

"I have no fear, my father," she answered, and stood with folded hands and serene and smiling face whilst he went through those forms of exorcism and adjuration which, it is said, no evil spirit can endure without crying aloud, or causing that the person possessed should roll and grovel in agony upon the ground, or rush frantically forth out of sight and hearing.

But the Maid never moved, save to bend her head in reverence as the Thrice Holy Name was proclaimed, and as the drops of holy water fell upon her brow. To me it seemed almost like sacrilege, in face of that pure and holy calm, to entertain for one moment a doubt of the origin of her mission. Yet it may be that the test was a wise one; for De Baudricourt and those about him watched it with close and breathless wonder; and one and another whispered behind his hand.

"Of a surety she is no witch. She could never stand thus if there was aught of evil in her. Truly

*** *This story commenced in the November number.*

she is a marvellous Maid. If this thing be of the Lord, let us not fight against Him."

The trial was over. The Maid received the blessing of the Abbé, who if not convinced of the sacredness of her mission, was yet impotent to prove aught against her. It is strange to me, looking back at those days, how far less ready of heart the ecclesiastics were to receive her testimony and recognise in her the messenger of the Most High than were the soldiers, whether the Generals whom she afterwards came to know, or the men who crowded to fight beneath her banner. One would have thought that to priests and clergy a greater grace and power of understanding would have been vouchsafed; but so far from this, they always held her in doubt and suspicion, and were her secret foes from first to last.

I made it my task to see her safely home; and as we went, I asked:

"Was it an offence to you, fair Maid, that he should thus seek to test and try you?"

"Not an offence to me, Seigneur," she answered gently, "but he should not have had need to do it For he did hear my confession on Friday. Therefore he should have known better. It is no offence to me, save inasmuch as it doth seem a slighting of my Lord."

The people flocked around her as she passed through the streets. It was wonderful how the common townsfolk already believed in her. Already she was spoken of as a deliverer and a saviour of her country. Nay, more, her gentleness and sweetness so won upon the hearts of those who came in contact with her, that mothers prayed of her to come and visit their sick children, or to speak words of comfort to those in pain and suffering; and such was the comfort and strength she brought with her, that there were whispers of miraculous cures being performed by her. In truth, I have no knowledge myself of any miracle performed by her, and the Maid denied that she possessed such gifts of healing. But that she brought comfort and joy and peace with her I can well believe, and she had some skill with the sick whom she tended in her own village, so that it is likely that some may have begun to mend from the time she began to visit them.

As for De Baudricourt, his mind was made up. There was something about this girl which was past his understanding. Just at present it was not possible to send her to the King, for the rains, sometimes mingled with blinding snow storms, were almost incessant, the country lay partially under water, and though such a journey might be possible to a seasoned soldier, he declared it would be rank murder to send a young girl, who, perchance, had never mounted a horse before, all that great distance. She must needs wait till the waters had somewhat subsided, and till the cold had abated, and the days were somewhat longer.

The Maid heard these words with grave regret, and even disapproval.

"My Lord would take care of me. I have no fear," she said; but De Baudricourt, although he now faithfully promised to send her to Chinon, would not be moved from his resolution to wait. For my part, I have always suspected that he sent a private messenger to Chinon to ask advice what he should do, and desired to await his return ere acting. But of that I cannot speak certainly, since he never admitted it himself.

If the delay fretted the Maid's spirit, she never spoke with anger or impatience; much of her time was spent in a little chapel in the crypt of the church at Vaucouleurs, where stood an image of Our Lady, before which she would kneel sometimes for hours together in rapt devotion. I myself went thither sometimes to pray; and often have I seen her there, so absorbed in her devotions that she knew nothing of who came or went.

By this time Bertrand and I had steadfastly resolved to accompany the Maid not only to Chinon, but upon whatsoever campaign her voices should afterwards send her. Although we were knights, we neither of us possessed great wealth; indeed, we had only small estates, and these were much diminished in value from the wasting war and misfortunes of the country. Still we resolved to muster each a few men-at-arms, and form for her a small train; for De Baudricourt, albeit willing to send her with a small escort to Chinon, had neither the wish nor the power to equip any sort of force to accompany her, though there would be no small danger on the journey, both from the proximity of the English in some parts, and the greater danger from roving bands of Burgundians, whose sole object was spoil and plunder, and their pastime the slaughter of all who opposed them.

And now we began to ask one another in what guise the Maid should travel; for it was obvious that her cumbrous peasant garb was little suited for the work she had in hand, and we made many fanciful plans of robing her after the fashion of some old-time queen, such as Boadicea or Semiramis, and wondered whether we could afford to purchase some rich clothing and a noble charger, and so convey her to the King in something of regal state and pomp.

But when, one day, we spoke something of this

to the Maid herself, she shook her head with a smile, and said:

"Gentle knights, I give you humble and hearty thanks; but such rich robes and gay trappings are not for me. My voices have bidden me what to do. I am to assume the dress of a boy, since I must needs live for a while amongst soldiers and men. I am sent to do a man's work, therefore in the garb of a man must I set forth. Our good citizens of Vaucouleurs are already busy with the dress I must shortly assume. There is none other in which my work can be so well accomplished."

"THE MAID STOOD BEFORE THE ABBÉ, LOOKING AT HIM WITH EARNEST, SHINING EYES."—(*p.* 121.)

And in truth we saw at once the sense of her words. She had before her a toilsome journey in the companionship of men. She must needs ride, since there was no other way of travelling possible; and why should the frailest and tenderest of the party be bŭrdened by a dress that would incommode her at every turn? And when, upon the very next day, she appeared in the Castle yard in the hose and doublet and breeches of a boy, and asked of us to give her her first lesson in horsemanship, all our doubts and misgivings fled away. She wore her dress with such grace, such ease, such simplicity, that it seemed at once the right and fitting thing, and not one of the soldiers in the courtyard who watched her feats that day, passed so much as a rude jest upon her, far less offered her any insult. In truth, they were speedily falling beneath the spell which she was soon to exercise upon a whole army, and it is no marvel to me that this was so; for every day I felt the charm of her presence deepening its hold upon my heart.

Never have I witnessed such quickness of mastery as the Maid showed, both in her acquirement of horsemanship and in the use of arms, in both of which arts we instructed her day by day. I had noted her strength and suppleness of limb

the very first day I had seen her; and she gave marvellous proof of it now. She possessed also that power over her horse which she exercised over men, and each charger that she rode in turn answered almost at once to her voice and hand, with a docility he never showed to other riders. Yet she never smote or spurred them; the sound of her voice, or the light pressure of knee or hand was enough. She had never any fear from the first, and was never unhorsed. Very soon she acquired such skill and ease that we had no fears for her with regard to the journey she soon must take.

Although filling the time up thus usefully, her heart was ever set upon her plan, and daily she would wistfully ask:

"May we not yet sally forth to the Dauphin?"

Still she bore the delay well, never losing opportunities for learning such things as might be useful to her; and towards the end of the month there came a peremptory summons to her from the Duke of Lorraine, who was lying very ill at Nancy.

"They tell me," he wrote to De Baudricourt, "that you have at Vaucouleurs a woman who may be in sooth that Maid of Lorraine who, it has been prophesied, is to arise and save France. I have a great curiosity to see her; wherefore, I pray you, send her to me without delay. It may be that she will recover me of my sickness. In any case, I would fain have speech of her; so do not fail to send her without delay."

De Baudricourt had no desire to offend his powerful neighbour, and he forthwith went down to the house of Leroyer, taking Bertrand and me with him, to ask of the Maid whether she would go to see the Duke at his Court, since the journey thither was but short, and would be a fitting preparation for the longer one.

We found her sitting in the saddler's shop, with one of his children on her lap, watching whilst he fashioned for her a saddle, which the citizens of Vaucouleurs were to give her. Bertrand and I were to present the horse she was to ride, and I had also sent to my home for a certain holiday suit and light armour belonging to a brother of mine who had died young. I had noted that the Maid had just such a slim, tall figure as he, and was certain that this suit, laid away by our mother in a cedar chest, would fit her as though made for her. But it had not come yet, and she was habited in the tunic and hose she now wore at all times. Her beautiful hair still hung in heavy masses round her shoulders, giving to her something of the look of a saintly warrior on painted window. Later on, when she had to wear a headpiece, she cut off her long curling locks, and then her hair just framed her face like a nimbus; but to-day it was still hanging loose upon her shoulders, and the laughing child had got his little hands well twisted in the waving mass, upon which the mid-day sun was shining clear and strong. She had risen, and was looking earnestly at De Baudricourt; yet all the while she seemed to be, as it were, listening for other sounds than those of his voice.

When he ceased she was silent for a brief while, and then spoke.

"I would fain it had been to the Dauphin you would send me, Seigneur; but since that may not be yet, I will gladly go to the Duke, if I may but turn aside to make my pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Nicholas, where I would say some prayers, and ask help."

"Visit as many shrines as you like, so as you visit the Duke as well," answered De Baudricourt, who always spoke with a sort of rough bluffness to the Maid, not unkindly, though it lacked gentleness. But she never evinced fear of him, and for that he respected her. She showed plenty of good sense whilst the details of the journey were being arranged, and was in no wise abashed at the prospect of appearing at a Court. How should she be, indeed, who was looking forward with impatience to her appearance at the Court of an uncrowned King?

Bertrand and I, with some half-dozen men-at-arms, were to form her escort, and upon the very next day, the sun shining bright, and the wind blowing fresh from the north over the wet lands, drying them somewhat after the long rains, we set forth. The Maid rode the horse which afterwards was to carry her so many long, weary miles. He was a tall chestnut, deep in the chest, strong in the flank, with a proudly arching neck, a great mane of flowing hair, a haughty fashion of lifting his shapely feet, and an eye that could be either mild or fierce, according to the fashion in which he was treated. On his brow was a curious mark, something like a cross in shape, and the colour of it was something deeper than the chestnut of his coat. The Maid marked this sign at the first glance, and she called the horse her Crusader. Methinks she was cheered and pleased by the red cross she thus carried before her, and she and her good steed formed one of those friendships which are good to see betwixt man and beast.

Our journey was not adventurous; nor will I waste time in telling overmuch about it. We visited the shrine, where the Maid passed a night in fasting and vigil, and laid thereon a little simple offering, such as her humble state permitted. The next day she was presented to the Duke of Lorraine, as he lay wrapped in costly

silken coverlets upon his great bed in one of the most sumptuous apartments of his Castle.

He gazed long and earnestly at the Maid, who stood beside him flinching neither from his hollow gaze, nor from the more open curiosity or admiration bestowed upon her by the lords and ladies assembled out of desire to see her. I doubt me if she gave them a thought. She had come to see the sick Duke, and her thoughts were for him alone.

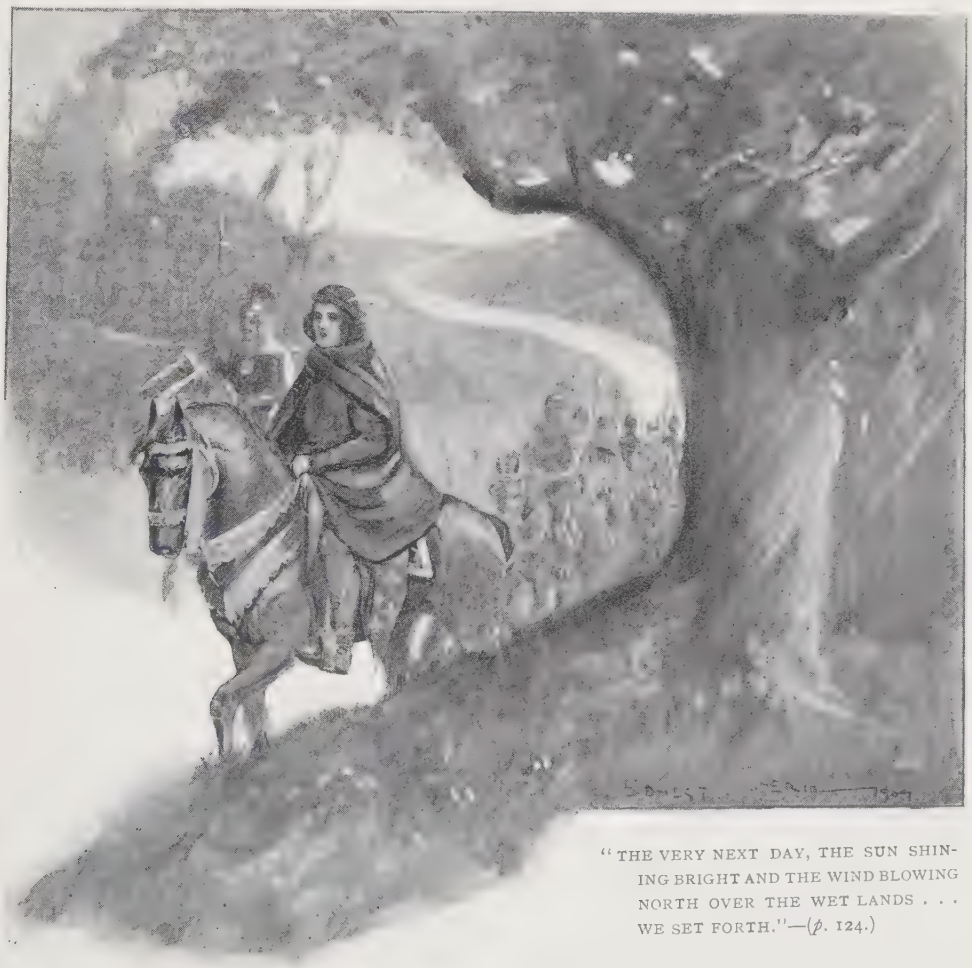
There was something very strange and beautiful in her aspect as she stood there. Her face was pale from her vigil and fast; her hair hung round it in a dark waving mass, that lighted up at the edges with gold where the light touched it. Her simple boy's dress was splashed and travel-stained; but her wonderful serene composure was as marked here as it had been throughout. No fears or tremors shook her, nor did any sort of consciousness of self or of the strangeness of her position come to mar the gentle dignity of her mien or the calm loveliness of her face.

The Duke raised himself on his elbow the better to look at her.

"Is this true what I have heard of you, that you are the Maid of Lorraine, raised up, according to the word of the wizard Merlin, to save France in the hour of her extremity?"

"I am come to save France from the English," she answered at once; "to drive them from the city of Orleans, to bring the Dauphin to Rheims, and there see the crown set upon his head. This I know, for my Lord has said it. Who I am matters nothing, save only as I accomplish the purpose for which I am sent."

Her sweet ringing voice sounded like a silver trumpet through the room, and the lords and ladies pressed nearer to hear and see.



"THE VERY NEXT DAY, THE SUN SHINING BRIGHT AND THE WIND BLOWING NORTH OVER THE WET LANDS . . . WE SET FORTH."—(*p.* 124.)

"In sooth, the Maid herself—the Maid who comes to save France!" Such was the whisper which went round; and I marvelled not; for the look upon that face, the glorious shining in those eyes, was enough to convince the most sceptical that the beatific vision had indeed been vouchsafed to them.

The Duke fell back on his pillows, regarding her attentively.

"If then, Maiden, you can thus read the future, tell me, shall I recover me of this sickness," he gasped.

"Of that, sire, I have no knowledge," she answered. "That lies with God alone; but if you would be His servant, flee from the wrath to come, which your sins have drawn upon you. Turn to the Lord in penitence. Do His will. Be reconciled to your wife; for such is the commandment of God. Perchance then you will find healing for body and soul. But seek not that which is hidden. Do only the will of the Lord, and trust all to Him."

She was hustled from the room by the frightened attendants, who feared for her very life at the hands of their irate lord. He had done many a man to death for less than such counsel. But the Maid felt not fear.

"He cannot touch me," she said, "I have my Lord's work yet to accomplish;" and in truth the Duke wished her no ill, though he asked not to see her more. Perhaps—who knows—these words may have aroused in him some gleams of penitence for his past life. I have heard he made a better end than was expected of him when his time came. And before the Maid left the Castle he sent her a present of money, and said he might even send his son to help the Dauphin if once Orleans were relieved, and her words began to fulfil themselves.

So then we journeyed home again, and we reached Vaucouleurs on the afternoon of the twelfth day of February. The Maid had been smiling and happy up till that time, and since the weather was improving, we had great hopes of soon starting forth upon the journey for Chinon. Nevertheless, the streams were still much swollen, and in some places the ground was so soft that it quaked beneath our horses' feet. We travelled without misadventure, however, and I wondered what it was that brought the cloud to the brow of the Maid as we drew nearer and nearer to Vaucouleurs.

But I was to know ere long; for as we rode into the courtyard of the Castle the Maid slipped from her horse ere any could help her, and went straight into the room where the Governor was sitting, with her fearless air of mastery.

"My lord of Baudricourt, you do great ill to your master the Dauphin in thus keeping me from him in the time of his great need. To-day a battle has been fought hard by the city of Orleans, and the arms of the French have suffered disaster and disgrace. If this go on, the hearts of the soldiers will be as water, the purpose of the Lord will be hindered, and you, Seigneur, will be the cause, in that you have not hearkened unto me, nor believed that I am sent of Him."

"How know you the thing of which you speak, girl?" asked De Baudricourt, startled at the firmness of her speech.

"My voices have told me," she answered; "voices that cannot lie. The French have met with disaster. The English have triumphed, and I still waste my time in idleness here! How long is this to continue, Robert de Baudricourt?"

A new note had come into her voice—the note of the General who commands. We heard it often enough later; but this was the first time I had noted it. How would De Baudricourt take it?

"Girl," he said, "I will send forth a messenger at once to ride with all speed to the westward. If this thing be so, he will quickly meet some messenger with the news. If it be as you have said, if this battle has been fought and lost, then will I send you forth without a day's delay to join the King at Chinon."

"So be it," answered the Maid; and turned herself to the chapel, where she spent the night in prayer.

It was Bertrand who rode forth in search of tidings, his heart burning within him. It was he who nine days later entered Vaucouleurs again, weary and jaded, but with a great triumph light in his eyes. He stood before De Baudricourt and spoke.

"It is even as the Maid hath said. Upon the very day when we returned to Vaucouleurs the English—a small handful of men—overthrew at Rouvray a large squadron of the French, utterly routing and well-nigh destroying them. The English were but a small party, convoying herrings to the besiegers of Orleans. The ground was strewn with herrings after the fight, which men call the Battle of the Herrings. Consternation reigns in the hearts of the French—an army flies before a handful! The Maid spake truly; the need is desperate. If help reach not the Dauphin soon, all will be lost!"

"Then let the Maid go!" thundered the old man, roused at last like an angry lion; "and may the God she trusts in guard and keep her, and give to her the victory!"

CHAPTER V.

HOW THE MAID JOURNEYED TO CHINON.

So the thing had come to pass at last—as she had always said it must. Robert de Baudricourt was about to send her to the Court of the Dauphin at Chinon. The weary days of waiting were at an end. She was to start forthwith; she and her escort were alike ready, willing, and eager. Her strange mystic faith and lofty courage seemed to have spread through the ranks of the chosen few who were to attend her. I trow, had she asked it, half the men of Vaucouleurs would have gladly followed in her train; for the whole town was moved to its core by the presence of the Maid in its midst. Almost were the townsfolk ready to worship her, only that there was something in her own simplicity and earnest piety which forebade such demonstration. All knew that the Maid herself would be first to rebuke any person offering to her homage other than true man can and ought to offer to true woman; and now let me speak here, once and for all, of the love and reverence and devotion which the Maid had power to kindle in the hearts of those with whom she came in contact. I can indeed speak of this, for I am proud to this day to call myself her true knight. From the first I felt towards her as I have felt to none since—not even to the wife of my manhood's tried affections. It was such a love as may be inspired by some almost angelic presence—there was no passion in it. I believe I speak truly when I say that not one of the Maid's true followers and knights and comrades-in-arms, ever thought of her as possible wife—ever even dreamed of her as lover. She moved amongst us as a being from another sphere. She inspired us with a courage, a power, and a confidence in her and in our cause, which nothing could shake or daunt. She was like a star, set in the firmament of heaven. Our eyes, our hearts turned towards her, but she was never as one of us. Still less was she as other women are, fashioned for soft flatteries, ready to be wooed and won. Ah no! With the Maid it was far otherwise. Truly do I think that of herself she had no thought, save as she was the instrument appointed of her Lord to do the appointed work. To that task her whole soul was bent. It filled her to the full with an ecstasy of devotion which required no words in which to express itself. And I can faithfully say that it was not the beauty of her face, the sweetness of her ringing voice, nor the grace and strength of her supple form which made of men her willing followers and servants. No, it was a power stronger and more sacred than any such carnal admiration. It came from the conviction, which none could fail to reach, that this Maid was indeed chosen and set apart of Heaven for a great and mighty work, and that in obeying her one was obeying the will of God, and working out some purpose determined in the counsels of the heavenlies.

With her man's garb and light armour, the Maid had assumed an air of unconscious command which sat with curious graceful dignity upon the serene calm of her ordinary demeanour. Towards her followers of the humbler sort she ever showed herself full of consideration and kindliness. She felt for their fatigues or privations in marching, was tenderly solicitous later on for the wounded. Above all, she was insistent that the dying should receive the consolations of religion, and it was a terrible thought to her that either friend or foe should perish unshriven and unassoiled. Her last act at Vaucouleurs, ere we started off in the early dawn of a late February day, was to attend Mass with all her following.

An hour later, after a hasty meal provided by De Baudricourt, we were all in the saddle, equipped and eager for the start. The Maid sat her chestnut charger as to the manner born. The pawings of the impatient animal caused her no anxiety. She was looking with a keen eye over her little band of followers, taking in, as a practised leader of men might do, their equipment and general readiness for the road. She pointed out to me several small defects which required adjusting and rectifying. Already she seemed to have assumed without effort, and as a matter of course, the position of leader and general. There was no abatement of her gentle sweetness of voice or aspect, but the air of command combined with it as though it came direct and without effort as a gift from heaven. None resented it; all submitted to it, and submitted with a sense of lofty joy and satisfaction which I have never experienced since, and which is beyond my power to describe.

There was one change in the outward aspect of the Maid, for her beautiful hair had been cut off, and now her head was crowned only by its cluster of short curling locks, upon which to-day she wore a cloth cap, though soon she was to adopt the head-piece which belonged to the light armour provided. She had been pleased by the dress of white and blue cut-cloth which I had humbly offered her, and right well did it become her. The other suit provided by the townsfolk was carried by one of the squires, that she might have change of garment if (as was but too probable) we should encounter drenching rains or blustering snow-storms. So far she had no sword of her own, nor had she spoken of the need of

such a weapon for herself. But as we assembled in the courtyard of the Castle, getting ourselves into the order of the march, De Baudricourt himself appeared upon the steps leading into the building, bearing in his hands a sword in a velvet scabbard, which he gravely presented to the Maid.

"A soldier, lady, has need of a sword," were his words, as he placed it in her hands; "take this sword, then. I trow it will do you faithful service; and may the Lord in whom you trust lead you to victory, and save this distracted realm of France from the perils which threaten to overwhelm her!"

"I thank you, Seigneur de Baudricourt," she answered, as she took the weapon, and permitted me to sling it for her in the belt for the purpose which she already wore, "I will keep your gift, and remember your good words, and how that you have been chosen of heaven to send me forth thus, and have done the bidding of the Lord, as I knew that so true a man must needs do at the appointed time. For the rest, have no fear. The Lord will accomplish that which He has promised. Before the season now beginning so tardily has reached its height, the Dauphin will be the anointed King of France, the English will have suffered defeat and Orleans will be free!"

"Heaven send you speak sooth, fair Maid," answered the rugged old soldier, as he eyed the slim figure before him with something of mingled doubt, wonder, and reverence in his eyes. Then as though some strange impulse possessed him, he took her hand and kissed it, and bending the knee before her, said:

"Give me, I pray you, a blessing, ere you depart!"

A wonderful light sprang into her eyes. She laid her hand upon the grizzled head, and lifted her own face, as was her wont, to the sunny sky.

"The blessing of the King of Heaven be upon you, Robert de Baudricourt, in that you have been an instrument chosen of Him. The grace and love of our Blessed Lady be yours, in that you have shown kindness and favour to a simple maid of the people, set apart by Heaven for a certain task. The favour and protection of the Saints be yours, in that you have believed the words of one who spake of them, and have been obedient to the command sent to you from them!"

She ceased speaking; but still continued to gaze upward with rapt and earnest eyes. Every head was bared, and we all gazed upon her, as upon one who looks through the open Gate of Heaven, and to whom is vouchsafed a glimpse of the Beatific Vision.

Then clear and sweet her voice rose once more. Her face was transfigured; a great light seemed to shine either upon or from it, no man could say which.

"O Lord God, Father of the Heavenlies, O sweet Jesu, Saviour of mankind, O Blessed Mother, Queen of Heaven, O Holy Michael, Archangel of the shining sword, O Blessed Saints—Catherine and Margaret, beloved of Heaven—give to these, Thy children, Your blessing, Your help, Your protection, Your counsel! Be with us in our journeyings—in our uprising and downlying, in our going out and coming in—in all we put our hands unto! Be with us and uphold us, and bring us in safety to our journey's end; for we go forth in the strength which is from above, and which can never fail us till the work appointed be accomplished!"

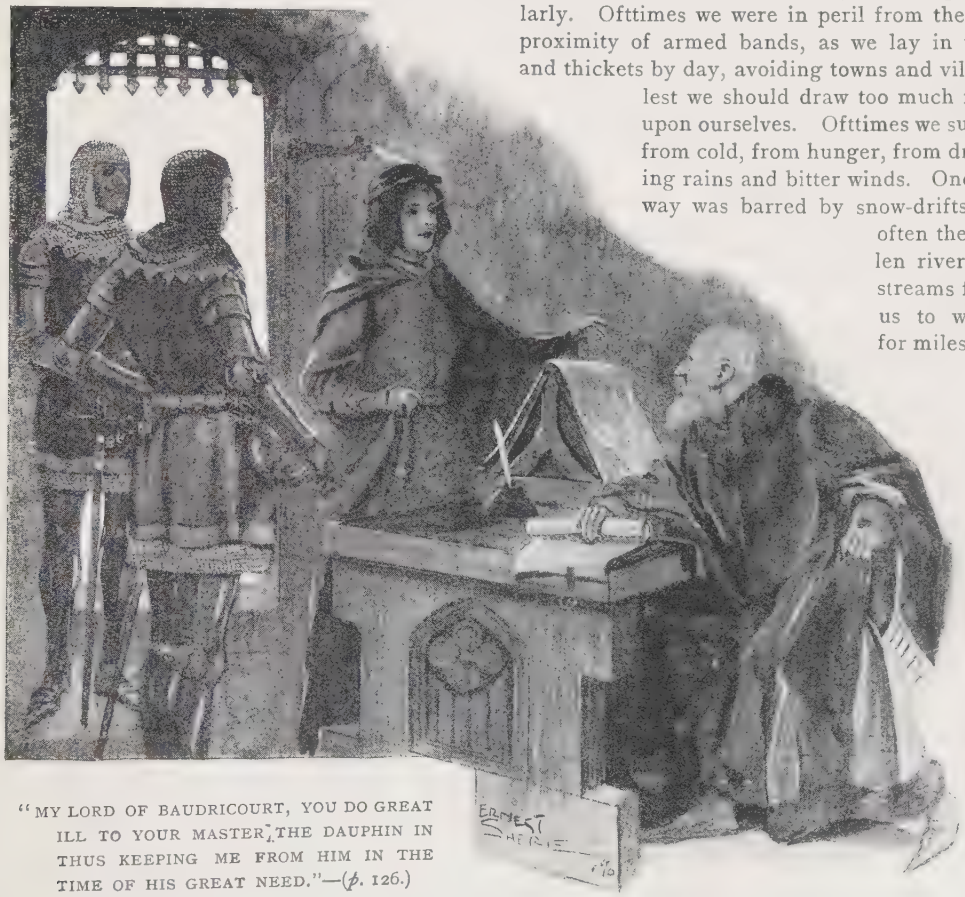
Then we rode forth, out of the courtyard, and into the streets of the town, which were thronged and lined with townsfolks, and with people from the surrounding villages, who had crowded in to see the wonderful Maid, and witness the outgoing of the little band which was to accompany her to Chinon.

Two of the Maid's brothers had sought to be of her train, and one went with us upon that day. The second she sent back with a letter (written at her dictation by my fingers, for she herself knew not letters, though of so quick an understanding in other matters) to her parents, praying earnestly for their forgiveness for what must seem to them like disobedience, and imploring their blessing. And this letter she dispatched by Jean, permitting Pierre to accompany us on the march. Her mother and two younger brothers at least believed in her mission by this time; but her father was doubtful and displeased, fearful for her safety, and suspicious of her credentials; and the eldest son remained of necessity at home to help his father, and whether or no he believed in his sister's call, I have never truly heard. But I know it pleased her that Pierre should be in her escort, though she was careful not to show him any marked favour above others; and as in days to come she was more and more thrown with the great ones of the land, she of necessity was much parted from him, though the bond of sisterly love was never slackened, and both Pierre, and afterwards Jean, followed her through all the earlier parts of her victorious career.

Leaving Vaucouleurs, we had need to march with circumspection, for the country was in no settled state, and it was probable that rumours of our march had got abroad, and that roving bands of English or Burgundian soldiers might be on the look out for us; for already it was

being noised abroad that a miraculous Maid had appeared to the aid of France, and though, no doubt, men jeered, and professed incredulity, still it was likely that she would be regarded in the light of a valuable prize if she could be carried off, and taken either to Duke Philip or to the Regent Bedford in Paris.

We had with us a King's archer from Chinon, who had been sent with news of the disaster at Rouvray. He was to conduct us back to Chinon by the best and safest routes. But he told us that the country was beset by roving bands of hostile soldiers, that his comrades had been slain, and that he himself only escaped as by a miracle; and his advice was urgent that after the first day we should travel by night, and lie in hiding during the hours of daylight—a piece of advice which we were fain to follow, being no strong force, able to fight our way through a disturbed country, and being very solicitous for the safety of the precious Maid who was at once our chiefest hope and chiefest care.



"MY LORD OF BAUDRICOURT, YOU DO GREAT ILL TO YOUR MASTER THE DAUPHIN IN THUS KEEPING ME FROM HIM IN THE TIME OF HIS GREAT NEED."—(*p.* 126.)

This, then, we did, after that first day's travel in the bright springtide sunshine. We were attended for many a mile by a following of mounted men from the district round, and when, as the sun began to wester in the sky, they took their leave of us, the Maid thanked them with gracious words for their company and good wishes, though she would not suffer them to kiss her hand or pay her homage; and after that they had departed, we did halt for many hours, eating and resting ourselves; for we meant to march again when the moon was up, and not lose a single night, so eager was the Maid to press on towards Chinon.

Of our journey I will not speak too particularly. Ofttimes we were in peril from the close proximity of armed bands, as we lay in woods and thickets by day, avoiding towns and villages, lest we should draw too much notice upon ourselves. Ofttimes we suffered from cold, from hunger, from drenching rains and bitter winds. Once our way was barred by snow-drifts, and often the swollen rivers and streams forced us to wander for miles seeking a ford that was practicable. But whatever were the hardships encountered, no word of murmuring ever escaped the lips of the Maid; rather her courage and sweet serenity upheld us all, and her example of patience and unselfishness inspired even the roughest of the men-at-arms with a desire to emulate it. Never, methinks, on such a toilsome march was so little grumbling, so little dis-

couragement, and, above all, so little swearing. And this, above all, was the doing of the Maid. For habit is strong with us all, and when things went amiss the oath would rise to the lips of the men about her, and be uttered without a thought. But that was a thing she could not bear. Her sweet pained face would be turned upon the speaker. Her clear ringing tones would ask the question:

"Shall we, who go forward in the Name of the Lord, dare to take His holy Name lightly upon our lips? What are His own words? Swear not at all. Shall we not seek to obey Him? Are we not vowed to His service? And must not the soldier be obedient above all others? Shall we mock Him by calling ourselves His followers, and yet doing that without a thought which He hath forbidden?"

Not once nor twice, but many times the Maid had to speak such words as these; but she never feared to speak them, and her courage and her purity of heart and life threw its spell over the rough men she had led, and they became docile in her hands like children, ready to worship the very ground she trod on. Long afterwards it was told me by one of mine own men-at-arms that there had been a regular plot amongst the rougher of the soldiers at the outset to do her a mischief, and to sell her into the hands of the Burgundians or the English. But even before leaving Vaucouleurs the men had wavered, half ashamed of their own doubts and thoughts, and before we had proceeded two days' journey forward, all, to a man, would have laid down their lives in her service.

The only matter that troubled the Maid was that we were unable to hear Mass, as she longed to do daily. The risk of showing ourselves in town or village was too great. But there came a night, when, as we journeyed, we approached the town of Fierbois, a place very well known to me; and when we halted in a wood with the first light of day, and the wearied soldiers made themselves beds amid the dried fern and fallen leaves, I approached the Maid, who was gazing wistfully towards the tapering spire of a church, visible at some distance away, and I said to her:

"Gentle Maid, yonder is the church of Sainte Catherine at Fierbois, and there will be, without doubt, early Mass celebrated within its walls. If you will trust yourself with Bertrand and myself, I trow we could safely convey you thither, and bring you back again, ere the day be so far advanced that the world will be astir to wonder at us."

Her face brightened as though a sunbeam had touched it. She needed not to reply in words. A few minutes later, and we were walking together through the wood, and had quickly reached the church, where the chiming of the bell told us that we should not be disappointed of our hope.

We knelt at the back of the church, and there were few worshippers there that morning. I could not but watch the face of the Maid, and suddenly I felt a curious thrill run through me, as though I had been touched by an unseen hand. I looked at her, and upon her face had come a look which told me that she was listening to some voice unheard by me. She clasped her hands, her eyes travelled toward the altar, and remained fixed upon it, as though she saw a vision. Her lips moved, and I thought I heard the murmured words:

"Blessed Sainte Catherine, I hear. I will remember. When the time comes I shall know what to do."

When the priest had finished his office we slipped out before anyone else moved, and reached the shelter of the woods again without encountering any other person. I almost hoped that the Maid would speak to us of what had been revealed to her in that church, but she kept the matter in her own heart. Yet, methinks, she pondered it long and earnestly; for although she laid her down as if to sleep, her eyes were generally wide open, looking upwards through the leafless budding boughs of the trees, with the look as though they beheld things not of this earth.

It was upon this day that I wrote, at the Maid's request, a letter to the uncrowned King at Chinon, asking of him an audience on behalf of Jeanne d'Arc, the maiden from Domrémy, of whom he had probably heard. This letter I dispatched to Sir Guy de Laval, asking him to deliver it to the King with his own hands, and to bring us an answer ere we reached Chinon, which we hoped now to do in a short while. The missive was carried by the King's archer, who knew his road right well, and was acquainted with the person of Sir Guy. He was to ride forward in all haste, whilst we were to follow in slower and more cautious fashion.

I think it was about the fifth day of March when the great towers of Chinon first broke upon our gaze. We had been travelling all the night, and it was just as the dawn was breaking that we espied the huge round towers rising, as it were, from amid the mists which clung about the river and its banks. There we halted, for no message had yet come from the King; but upon the Maid's face was a look of awe and radiant joy as she stood a little apart, gazing upon the goal of her

toilsome journey. No fear beset her as to her reception, just as no fears had troubled her with regard to perils by the way.

"God clears the way for me," she said, when news had been brought from time to time of bands of soldiers whom we had narrowly escaped; and now, as she looked upon the towers of Chinon, growing more and more distinct as the daylight strengthened, her face wore a smile of serene confidence in which natural fear and shrinking had no part.

"The Dauphin will receive me. Fear nothing. The work which is begun will go forward to its completion. God hath spoken in His power. He hath spoken, and His word cannot fail."

So after we had fed she lay down, wrapped in a cloak, and fell asleep like a child; whilst I rode forward a little way along the plain, for I had seen a handful of horsemen sallying forth, as it seemed from the castle, and I hoped that it was Sir Guy bearing letter or message from the King.

Nor was I mistaken in this hope. Soon I was certain of my man, and Sir Guy in turn recognising me, spurred forward in advance of his followers, and we met alone in the plain, Bertrand, my companion, being with me.

"So there really is to be a miracle worked, and by a Maid!" cried Sir Guy, as we rode with him towards our camp; "*Mort de Dieu!*—but it is passing strange. All the Court is in a fever of wonder about this Angelic Maid, as some call her; whilst others vow she is either impostor or witch. Is it the same, Bertrand, of whom you did speak upon the day we parted company?"

"The same; and yet in one way not the same; for since then she hath grown apace in power and wonder, so that all who see her marvel at her, and some be ready to worship her. But we will say no more. You shall see for yourself, and the King also shall see, if he refuse not to receive one who comes to him as the messenger of God."

"I am sent to conduct the Maid presently to the Castle," answered Sir Guy. "There is now great desire to see her and hear her, and to try and test the truth of her mission. The Generals scoff aloud at the thought of going to battle with a maid for leader. The Churchmen look grave, and talk of witchcraft and delusion. The ladies of the Court are in a fever to see her. As for the King and his Ministers, they are divided in mind

"DE BAUDRICOURT BORE IN HIS HANDS A SWORD IN A VELVET SCABBARD. 'A SOLDIER, LADY, HAS NEED OF A SWORD,' WERE HIS WORDS, AS HE PLACED IT IN THE MAID'S HANDS."—(*p.* 128.)

'twixt hope and fear; but truly matters are come to such desperate pass with us, that if some help come not quickly, the King will flee him away from his distracted realm, and leave the English and Burgundians to ravage and subdue at will!"

"God forbid!" said I, and crossed myself.

Scarce had I spoken the words before I saw approaching us on her chestnut charger the Maid herself, who rode forward to meet us at a foot's pace, and reined back a few yards from us, her eyes fixed full upon the face of Sir Guy, who uncovered, I scarce know why, for how should he know that this youthful soldier was indeed the Maid herself?

"You come from the Dauphin," she said; "but tell him that the darkest hour but heralds the dawn. He must not flee away. He must stay to face his foes. I will lead his armies to victory, and he shall yet be crowned King of France. Let him never speak more of deserting his realm. That shall not—that must not be!"

Guy was off his horse by now; he bent his knee to the Maid.

"I will tell the King that the Deliverer hath truly come," he said; and taking her hand, ere she could prevent it, he reverently kissed it.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE MAID CAME TO THE KING.

So Guy de Laval had fallen beneath the spell of the Maid, even as we had done. He spoke of it to me afterwards. It was no spoken word of hers, albeit she had plainly shown knowledge of that which he had been saying before her approach. It was not just the beauty of her serene face, or the dignity of her mien. It was as though some power outside of himself urged him to this act of submission. An overshadowing presence seemed to rest upon him as with the touch of a hand, and he who had laughed at the idea of the restoration of miracles suddenly felt all his doubts and misgivings fall away.

We rode together back to our camp, and there we talked long and earnestly of many things. The Maid had much to ask of Sir Guy, but her questions were not such as one would have guessed. She never inquired how the Dauphin (as she always called him) had first heard of her, how he regarded her, what his Ministers and the Court thought of her mission, whether they would receive her in good part, what treatment she might expect when she should appear at Chinon. No; such thoughts as these seemed never to enter her head. She was in no wise troubled as to the things which appertained to herself. Not once did a natural curiosity on this ground suggest such inquiry as this; and though we would fain have asked many of these questions, something in her own absence of curiosity, her own earnestness as to other matters, restrained us from putting them.

It was of the city of Orleans she desired to know. What was the condition of the garrison? What were the armies of England doing? What was the disposition of the beleaguering force? Was any project of relief on foot amongst the Dauphin's soldiers? Did they understand how much depended upon the rescue of the devoted city?

Guy de Laval was able to answer these questions, for he had himself ridden from Chinon to Orleans with messages to the Generals in the beleaguered city. He reported that the blockade was not perfected; that provisions could still find their way—though with risk, and danger of loss—into the town, and that letters and messengers could pass to and fro by exercising great caution, and by the grace of Heaven. He told her of the great fortresses the English had built, where they dwelt in safety, and menaced the town and battered its walls with their engines of war. The garrison and the city were yet holding bravely out, and the Generals Dunois and La Hire were men of courage and capacity. But when the Maid asked how it came about that the English—who could not be so numerous as the French forces in the town—had been suffered to make these great works unmolested, he could only reply with a shake of the head, and with words of evil omen.

"It is the terror of the English which has fallen upon them. Since the victory of Agincourt, none have ever been able to see English soldiers drawn up in battle array without feeling their blood turn to water, and their knees quake under them. I know not what the power is; but at Rouvray it was shown forth again. A small force of soldiers—but a convoy with provisions for the English lines—overcame and chased to destruction a French army ten times its own strength. It is as though the English had woven some spell about us. We cannot face them—to our shame be it spoken! The glorious days of old are past. If Heaven come not to our aid, the cause of France is lost!"

"Heaven has come to the aid of France," spoke the Maid, with that calm certainty which never deserted her; "have no fear, gentle knight. Let the Dauphin but send me to Orleans, and the English will speedily be chased away."

"It will need a great army to achieve that, fair Maid," spoke Sir Guy; "and alas, the King has

but a small force at his disposal, and the men are faint-hearted and fearful."

"It is no matter," answered the Maid, with shining eyes; "is it anything to my Lord whether He overcomes by many or by few? Is His arm shortened at all, that He should not fulfil that which He has promised? France shall see ere long that the Lord of Hosts fights for her. Will not that be enough?"

"I trow it will," answered De Laval, baring his head.

It was not until the evening was drawing on that we entered the fortress of Chinon, where the King held his Court. A very splendid castle it was, and when, later in my life, I did visit the realm of England, and looked upon the Castle of Windsor there, it did bring back greatly to my mind that Castle of Chinon, with its towers and battlements overhanging, as it were, the river, and the town clustered at its foot. We had delayed our approach that our wearied and way-worn men might rest and give a little care to their clothes and arms, so that we presented not too travel-stained and forlorn an appearance. We desired to do honour to the Maid we escorted, and to assume an air of martial pomp, so far as it was possible to us.

Sir Guy had ridden on in front to announce our coming. He told me that the King was full of curiosity about the Maid, and that the ladies of the Court were consumed with wonder and amaze; but that the Prime Minister, De La Tremouille, was strenuously set against having aught to do with that "dreamer of dreams," as he slightingly called her, whilst the King's confessor was much of the same mind, in spite of what was reported about her from the priests who had seen and examined her.

There was no mistaking the sensation which our approach occasioned when at last we reached the walls of the Castle. Soldiers and townspeople, gentlemen and servants, were assembled at every coign of vantage to watch us ride in; and every eye was fixed upon the Maid, who rode as one in a dream, her face slightly raised, her eyes shining with the great joy of an object at last achieved, and who seemed unconscious of the scrutiny to which she was subjected, and unaware of the excitement which her presence evoked.

For the most part deep silence reigned as we passed by. No acclamation of welcome greeted us, nor did any murmurs of distrust smite upon our ears. There was whispering and a rustling of garments, and the clank of arms; but no articulate words, either friendly or hostile, till, as we passed the drawbridge, one of the sentries, a great, brawny fellow, half French half Scottish, uttered an insult to the Maid, accompanying his words by a horrible blasphemy.

My hand was upon my sword-hilt. I could have slain the man where he stood; but I felt the Maid's touch on my shoulder, and my hand sank to my side. She paused before the sentry, gazing at him with earnest eyes, full of mournful reproach and sorrow.

"O Lord Jesu, forgive him!" she breathed softly, and as the fellow, half ashamed, but truculent still, and defiant, turned upon her as though he would have repeated either his insult or his blasphemy, she held up her hand and spoke aloud, so that all who stood by might hear her words:

"O, my friend, speak not so rashly, but seek to make your peace with God. Know you not how near you stand to death this night? May God pardon and receive your soul."

The man shrank back as one affrighted. It was scarce two hours later that as he was crossing a narrow bridge-like parapet, leading from one part of the Castle to another, he fell into the swollen and rapid stream beneath, and was heard of no more. Some called it witchcraft, and said that the Maid had overlooked him; but the more part regarded it as a sign that she could read the future, and that things unknown to others were open to her eyes; and this, indeed, none could doubt who was with her at this time, as I shall presently show.

I had expected that Sir Guy would come to lead us into the chamber of audience, where we were told the King would receive us. But he did not come, and we were handed on from corridor to corridor, from room to room, first by one richly-apparelled servant of the Court, then by another. Our men-at-arms, of course, had been detained in one of the courtyards, where their lodgings were provided. Only Bertrand and I were suffered, by virtue of our knighthood, to accompany the Maid into the presence of royalty; and neither of us had ever seen the King, or knew what his outward man was like.

But she asked no question of us as to that, nor how she was to comport herself when she reached the audience chamber. Neither had she desired to change her travel-stained suit for any other, though, in truth, there was little to choose betwixt them now; only methinks most in her case would have provided some sort of gay raiment wherewith to appear before the King. But the Maid thought nought of herself, but all of her mission, and she held that this was a matter which could be touched by no outward adorning or bravery of apparel.

None who passed through the galleries and cor-

ridors of the Castle of Chinon in these days would have guessed to what a desperate pass the young King's affairs had come. Music and laughter resounded there. Courtiers fluttered about in gorgeous array, and fine ladies like painted butterflies bore them company. Feasting and revelry swallowed up the days and nights. No clang of arms disturbed the gaieties of the careless young monarch. If despair and desperation were in his heart, he pushed them back with a strong hand. He desired only to live in the present. He would not look beyond. So long as he could keep his Court about him, he would live after this fashion; and when the English had swept away the last barriers, and were at the very gates, then he would decide whether to surrender himself upon terms, or to fly to some foreign land. But to face the foe in gallant fight was an alternative which had never been entertained by him, until such time as he had received the message from the Maid; and then it was rather with wonder and curiosity than any belief in her mission that he had consented to receive her.

A pair of great double doors was flung open before us. We stood upon the threshold of a vast room, lighted by some fifty torches, and by the blaze of a gigantic fire which roared half way up the vast chimney. This great audience chamber seemed full of dazzling jewels and gorgeous raiment. One could scarce see the faces and figures in the shifting throng for the wonder of this blaze of colour. But there was no daïs on which the King was seated in state, as I had expected. No figure stood out conspicuous in the throng as that of royalty. I gazed at one and another, as we stood in the doorway, our eyes still half dazzled by the glare of light and by the brilliance of the assembled company, but I could by no means distinguish the King from any of the rest. Many men, by their gorgeous raiment, might well be the greatest one present; but how to tell? All were quiet now. They had fallen a little back, as though to gaze upon the new comer. Smiling faces were turned upon us. Eager eyes were fastened upon the Maid's face. She stood there, with the glare of the torches upon her, looking upon the scene with her calm, direct gaze, without tremor of fear or thought of shame.

One of the great Seigneurs—I know not which—came forward with a smile and a bow, and gave her his hand to lead her forward.

"I will present you to the King," he said; and made in a certain direction, as though he would lead her to a very kingly-looking personage in white and crimson velvet, blazing with diamonds; but ere he had taken many steps, the Maid drew her hand from his, and turning herself in a different direction, went forward without the least wavering, and knelt down before a young man in whose attire there was nothing in any way gorgeous or notable.

"Gentle Dauphin," she said, in that clear voice of hers which always made itself heard above other sounds, though at this moment a great hush prevailed throughout the audience chamber, and wondering eyes were fixed full upon the Maid, "God give you good life, and victory over your enemies!"

Astonishment was in the young man's face; but he took the Maid by the hand, and said:

"You mistake, fair damsel; it is not I that am the King. See, he is there; let me take you to him."

But she would not be raised; she knelt still at his feet, and the hand which he had given her she held to her lips.

"Gentle Dauphin, think not to deceive me. I know you, who you are. You are he to whom I am sent, to win you the victory first, and then to place the crown of France upon your head. It is you, and none other, who shall rule in France!"

The young man's face had changed greatly now. A deep agitation replaced the former smile of mockery and amusement. Several of the courtiers were exchanging meaning glances; in the hush of the hall every spoken word could be heard.

"Child, how dost thou know me?" asked the King, and his voice shook with emotion.

Her answer was not strange to us, though it might have been sō to others.

"I am Jeanne the Maid," she replied, as if in so saying she was saying enough to explain all; "I am sent to you by the King of Heaven; and it is His Word that I have spoken. You shall be crowned and consecrated at Rheims, and shall be lieutenant of the King of Heaven, Who is King of France, but who wills that you shall reign over that fair realm!"

"Have you a message from Him to me?" asked the King, speaking like a man in a dream.

"Ay, verily I have," answered the Maid, "a message which none but you must hear; for it is to you alone that I may tell it."

Then the King took her by the hand, and raised her up, gazing at her with a great wonder and curiosity; and he led her behind a curtain into a deep recess of the window, where prying eyes could not see them, nor inquisitive ears overhear her words. And so soon as they had disappeared there, a great hum and buzz of wonder rose throughout the hall, and we saw Sir Guy detach himself from a knot of gay courtiers, and come hastily towards us.

"Is it not wonderful!" he cried. "And I had feared that she would be deceived, and that the mockers would have the laugh against her in the first moment. Though how they looked for her to have knowledge of the King's person I know not. Surely none can doubt but that she is taught by the Spirit of God."

"You mean the fear lest he was not the true son of the King."

"Yes; his wicked mother hinted away her own honour in her desire to rob him of his crown. He has known her for an evil woman. Was it not likely he would fear she might speak truth? Those who know him best know that he has often

"'GENTLE DAUPHIN,' SAID THE MAID, 'GOD GIVE YOU GOOD LIFE, AND VICTORY OVER YOUR ENEMIES.'" —(*p.* 134.)

"It was done to prove her!"

"Ay, it was the thought of De la Tremouille, who has ridiculed her pretensions (the word is his) from first to last. But it was a thought welcomed by all, as a passing merry jest. Thus was it that I was not permitted to come and lead you in. They did fear lest I should tell what was intended, and describe the person or the dress of the King to the Maid. And now none can doubt; and, in sooth, it may be a wondrous thing for His Majesty himself, and take from him for ever that hateful fear which I always do declare has helped to paralyse him, and hold him back from action."

I lowered my voice to a whisper as I said:

doubted his right to style himself Dauphin or King; but methinks after to-day that doubt must needs be set at rest. If the Maid who comes from

the King of Heaven puts that name upon him, need he fear to take it for his own?"

As we were thus speaking the Sieur de Boisi joined us. He was perchance more fully in the King's confidence than any other person at Court, and he was kinsman to De Laval, with whom he had plainly already had much talk upon this subject. He drew us aside, and whispered a story in our ears.

"His Majesty did tell it me himself," he said, "for there be nights when he cannot sleep, and he calls me from my couch at his bed's foot, and makes me lie beside him, that we may talk at ease; and he told me, not long since, how that this trouble and doubt were so growing upon him, that once he had fasted for a whole day, and had passed the night upon his knees in the oratory, praying for a sign whereby he might truly know whether he were the real heir, and the kingdom justly his. For that were it not so, he would sooner escape to Spain or Scotland to pass his days in peace; but that if the Lord would send him a sign, then he would seek to do his duty by the realm."

With awe we looked into each other's faces.

"The sign has come!" whispered Bertrand.

"Truly I do think it," answered De Boisi.

"Surely His Majesty will recognise it as such!" said Sir Guy.

"I see not how it can be otherwise; and it will be like a great load lifted from his heart."

"And he will surely hesitate no more," I said "but will forthwith give her a band of armed men, that she may sally forth to the aid of the beleaguered Orleans!"

But De Boisi and De Laval looked doubtful.

"I know not how that will be. For there are many who will even now seek to dissuade the King, and will talk of witchcraft, and I know not what beside. The Abbés and the Bishops and the priests are alike distrustful and hostile. The Generals of the army openly scoff and jeer. Some say that if the Maid be sent to Orleans, both La Hire and Dunois will forthwith retire, and refuse all further office there. What can a peasant maid know of the art of war? they ask, and how can she command troops and lead them on to victory, where veterans have failed again and again? And then the King knows not what to reply—"

"But she hath given him wherewith to reply!" broke out Bertrand, with indignation in his tones. "She comes not in her own strength, but as the envoy of the King of Heaven. Is that not enough?"

"Enough for us who have seen and heard her," answered Sir Guy; "but will it prove enough for those who only hear of her from others, and who call her a witch, and say that she works by evil spells, and has been sent of the Devil for our deception and destruction and undoing?"

"Then let them send for one of the Generals from Orleans, and let him judge for himself!" cried Bertrand hotly; "you say the city is not so closely blockaded but that with care and caution men may get in or out? Then let some one send and fetch one of these commanders, and if he be not convinced when he sees her, then he will be of very different stuff from all else who have doubted, but whose doubts have been dispelled."

"In faith, that is no bad thought," spoke De Boisi thoughtfully, "and I trow it might be possible of accomplishment. I will certainly speak with the King of it. He is young; he is not firm of purpose; his own heart has never before been set upon his kingdom. One cannot expect a man's nature to change in a day, even though his eyes may have been opened, his misgivings set at rest. If one of the Generals were won to her side, the troubles that beset us would be well-nigh overcome."

A great clamour of sound from the larger audience chamber, from which we had retired to talk at ease, warned us now that the King and the Maid had appeared from their private conference. His face was very grave, and there was more of earnestness and nobility in his expression than I had thought that countenance capable of expressing. The Maid was pale, as though with deep emotion; but a glorious light shone in her eyes, and when the Court ladies and gallants crowded round her, asking her questions, and gazing upon her as though she were a being from another sphere, she seemed lifted up above them into another region, and though she answered them without fear, she put aside, in some wonderful way, all those questions which were intrusions into holy things, speaking so fearlessly and so simply that all were amazed at her.

She came to us at last, weary, yet glad at heart; and her first question was for her followers, and whether they had been lodged and fed. We supped with her at her request, and in private, and her face was very calm and glad, though she spoke nothing of what had passed between her and the King. Only when Bertrand said:

"You have done a great work to-day," did she look at him with a smile as she replied:

"My work hath but just begun, and may yet be hindered; but have no fear. The Lord has spoken, and He will bring it to pass. He will not fail us till all be accomplished."

(To be continued.)

HER FIRST MUSIC LESSON.

A SIDE VIEW OF THE COLLEGE.

Famous Girls' Schools.

XI.—VICTORIA COLLEGE, BELFAST.

By DORA LIMEBEER, M.A.

THE motto of Victoria College, "Work faithfully done can never be a failure," sums up the spirit of its founder Mrs. Byers. An undaunted spirit and phenomenal success, which can only be realised by recalling the difficulties which she had to face at the outset of her career.

It is hard for us to picture the general attitude towards secondary education in the middle of last century. The apathy and poverty of Ireland, and the absence of all State-help, left everything to be done by the founder's unaided effort. Mrs. Byers was without free buildings, without patronage, committee, prizes (for at that time it was thought by many "unladylike" that girls should be offered prizes in money), with nothing but her own brain for her original capital, her faith in the work of education, to keep up her zeal for her countrywomen's good.

In addition to apathy, there was actual aversion to girls receiving the same education as boys, as tending to make them unwomanly.

Then, too, remember the position of the private governess of the time, for, when the college was first opened, even private schools were few and far between. The story of Charlotte Brontë's little pupil comes into my mind, whose affectionate cry "I love you, Miss Brontë!" was crushed by her mother's nipping rejoinder, "What! love the *governess*, my dear?" And this position and conception of the *genus* governess was partly due to the ignorance, or at best second-rate knowledge, which, handed down from generation to generation, made a step forward impossible without a pioneer to wipe away old prejudices and establish new conditions.

It is impossible to give any idea of the college

history, without referring at the same time to the general development of Irish education, for Mrs. Byers has always shown such zeal and promptitude in advocating and taking advantage of reforms, that the story of the college and of education in Ireland are practically synonymous.

In 1859 the college was founded under the name of "The Belfast Ladies' Collegiate School."

In 1870 women were admitted to the Queen's University examinations. This opportunity of aiming at a high standard of learning, as well as the careful system of internal examinations already established, must have been a spur to study and method unknown to girls before.

Meanwhile the number of pupils increased so rapidly that, owing to the impossibility of finding a suitable house, the present large buildings were erected in 1874. There is now also an isolated sanatorium.

In 1878 came that tide in the affairs of girls which, taken at the flood, led on to fortune, to knowledge, and independence. It was Mrs. Byers who took it at the flood. She found that the Irish Intermediate Education Bill, which had just been introduced into the House of Commons, applied to boys only—gave to boys alone the advantages and help it brought. At the school prize-giving, which happened to be the next day, Mrs. Byers first, and after her others who were present, spoke in such earnest words against this unjust handicap that the matter was taken up warmly by the papers.

The late Miss Isabella Tod, a Belfast lady famous for her zeal for women's interests and her great intellectual power and eloquence, interested the English friends of women's education in the subject, while Mrs. Byers' practical support, and the work done by the College in University examinations, could not be overlooked by leaders on both sides of the House, and girls were included in the Bill. Thus the first measure of justice was done to girls in secondary education in the United Kingdom.

THE COUNCIL OF THE VICTORIA COLLEGE DEBATING SOCIETY.

The education given at the school was already such that, in the very first year of the new regulations, forty-one candidates entered for the examinations, six of whom carried off exhibitions, leaving only nine to be won by the whole of Ulster.

In 1884 women were admitted to the examinations of the Royal University.

A CORNER OF THE LARGE DINING ROOM AT VICTORIA COLLEGE.
A delightful spot for hungry girls.

In 1887 Queen Victoria, on the occasion of her Jubilee, in recognition of the great success and usefulness of the school, conferred upon it the title of Victoria College, now famous in Ireland, and well known in the United Kingdom and beyond.

A PART OF THE DREAD EXAMINATION HALL AT VICTORIA COLLEGE.
Reassuring records of past triumphs fail to give courage at the crisis.

Enough has been said to show the aim of the founder—the providing of education in her own college for girls of all grades of the middle class and the paving of the way to independence for all Irish women.

She has indeed been a pioneer—the first to realise that girls should have the same training as boys, and that women are, by their tact, sympathy, and infinite capacity for taking pains, naturally fitted to be teachers; the first to prepare them for their life's work and to obtain it for them; the first to engage women teachers

n school and University classes for subjects previously and elsewhere taught by men, teachers whom in many cases she has had to train herself; the first to build a school gymnasium, to encourage Slöyd, Kindergarten training, classes in cooking and dressmaking; the first to seize an opportunity, and often the first in her success; the first to widen the field of knowledge and interest, for all means of development does she encourage in play and work.

We must all have noticed how often success in examinations, debating, organising and sports go hand in hand. A good example of the "all round" girl is Melissa Hall, who beat the record by gaining for four consecutive years, a year under age, the first place in the intermediate examinations. She is also one of the best hockey players of the college and a member of the Inter-provincial team, as well as a leading spirit in the college social life.

Music, drawing, and elocution are not left unprovided for at Victoria College. General reading is fostered by the libraries, the Literary Society, with its crowded meetings, the Debating Society, arranged and carried on by the students unaided, to some of the debates to which only students are admitted, and no lecturers may enter in, though it may be gathered from the Magazine that a great height of erudition and animation is reached, unchecked by the paralysing presence of those in power.

The value of both private and public debates cannot be over-estimated, in producing quickness, interest in every-day matters, and clearness of word and thought, as well as breaking through the ice of reserve and shyness, which might otherwise be an incalculable check at the crucial moment of a career.

VICTORIA COLLEGE, BELFAST: ONE OF THE SENIOR CLASS ROOMS.

Then, too, there is the widely-circulated Magazine, with its literary competitions in prose and verse, articles, letters from abroad, news of the doings and successes of past and present students in work and play, noticeably in hockey. The name of Victoria College is mighty in the hockey world. For two years it held the Ulster shield; it has had a representative in the International team, and has several in the Inter-provincial team. The season before last in all the matches of the newly instituted league, it did not sustain one defeat.

THE VICTORIA COLLEGE GYMNASIUM.

Last season its success has not been so marked, owing to the temporary absence of girls in Germany, and the sad departure of athletic B.A's. May the returning exiles and the 'freshers' restore its old prestige!

Mrs. Byers' versatility and activity are amazing. The Head of a large college, she yet finds time to be a leading spirit in educational progress, to interest herself in Mission work, with which her early life was so intimately connected, and in Temperance reform, in which her name is widely known. It was mainly through her efforts that the Victoria Homes at Ballysillan were erected for destitute little girls, many of whom have a "lady" among the teachers and pupils, who visits, corresponds with, and helps, if possible, the waif who is her special *protegée*.

Even now the efforts of the founder are unremitting. She encourages those whom she does not consider suited for teaching to enter the new fields open to women, especially the branches of technical and domestic training. She invites inspection of schools, unknown in secondary schools in Ireland until this year. This very summer, to cope with the new science regulations of the Intermediate examinations, she has fitted up a large laboratory.

Education has been compared to the words of the Red Queen to Alice, "In this country you have to run as hard as you can, to keep in the same place." What effort then not only to keep abreast with the times, but to be in the van of the ever forward march!

And now to bring before you the work of a Victorian's day and year.

The Irish terms and holidays are arranged somewhat differently from the English. The long summer holiday lasts over eight weeks, from the end of June to the first week in September, the disadvantage of a slightly shorter vacation at Christmas and Easter, and the rather long autumn term being more than compensated for by the sensible and humane arrangement of all play and no work in July.

Each morning, although the amount of work to be done necessitates some small classes beginning at nine o'clock, the bell rings at ten to allow the pupils who come in by train from all directions around to assemble in the hall for daily prayers. After that a morning of lectures or lessons till two, or in a few cases where pupils, teachers and time distractingly refuse to coincide, till three. I say "distractingly" advisedly, for it has ever been the aim of

Head and teachers to encourage honours work, to help backward girls, to subdivide classes and give individual attention to all.

This arrangement of hours leaves the afternoons free for hockey, walking or cycling, and on Saturdays many a happy picnic party starts off betimes to wood or glen or coast in the beautiful surroundings of the town. Nobody has realised more clearly than Mrs. Byers the necessity for girls of self-help and initiative, nobody has more keenly encouraged college societies and entertainments. The picnics are due entirely to the suggestion and invitation of the pupils. Each year the debating society gives a most successful evening of music, dancing, recitations, and other social entertainments.

In February, 1900, with the sympathy always shown by Victorians at the call of the needy, a programme of music and tableaux was arranged in the words of an Irishman, "in aid of the widows and orphans of the soldiers killed and disabled in the war." Victorians will long remember the exciting preparations of the weeks before, the appalling whisper that there were over nine hundred people in the hall and others being turned away from the doors, and the glow of pride with which they saw file out the last of a genuinely pleased audience, and counted the goodly pile of coins that they had left behind them.

And what is the result of all this effort and varied training in examinations and in after-life? The College successes are so well and widely known that it is superfluous to record them here. About two thousand five hundred students have been certificated by various examining bodies. The large proportion of the three hundred pupils (forty of whom are resident), who carry off honours and rewards

THE HOCKEY TEAM WHICH SO WORTHILY REPRESENTED VICTORIA COLLEGE DURING THE SEASON OF 1899-1900

is remarkable. In the Intermediate examinations, for sixteen out of seventeen consecutive years, the College has easily beaten all other girls' schools in Ireland. A very large proportion of scholarships, prizes and honours has fallen to its share. In fact, when prizes were first offered for open competition in connection with the Queen's University Examinations, these were so uniformly awarded to the pupils of Victoria College that one kind lady came really to believe that her prize, which was offered to institutions in every part of Ireland, was a special gift to the College. Last year, five out of the sixteen £50 exhibitions open to all were won by its Senior Grade Candidates. Again and again has the first place in each grade, and the first place in the classical, modern language, mathematical and other lists been won by Victorians.

In all they have carried off about four hundred exhibitions.

What is the after life of all these successful students? Many go to the training colleges of England and Scotland before trying to obtain posts; some are head mistresses, many in schools which, inspired by the example of their Head, they themselves have founded; others are assistant mistresses in all parts of the United Kingdom, and even of the world; many are teachers and lecturers in their Alma Mater; many become hospital nurses, doctors, medical missionaries, or missionaries; many, in homes of their own, are showing that, in George Meredith's words, "the choicest women are those that yield not a feature of their womanliness for some amount of manly strength!"

Photo by Alice Hughes.

MRS. BYERS, THE FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL OF VICTORIA COLLEGE

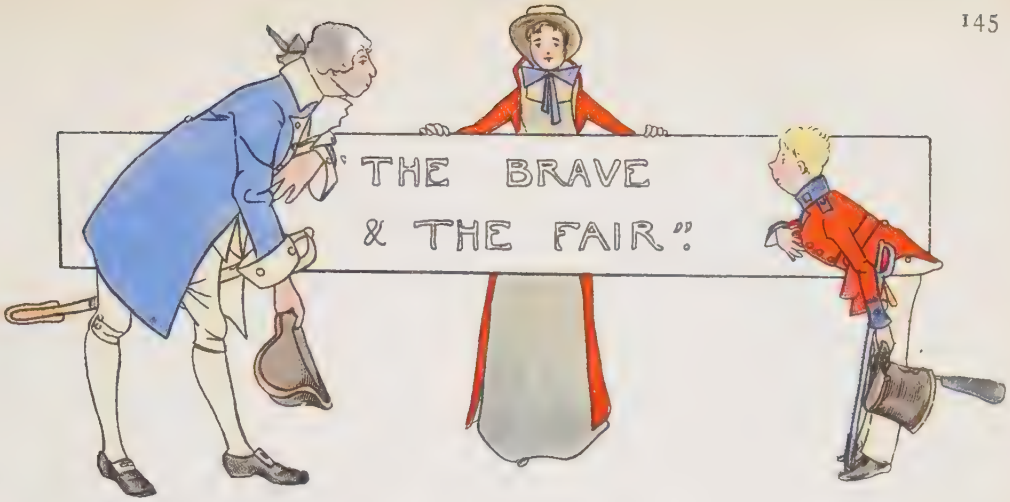
And the pioneer of education for girls in Ireland.

From the University house have come five M.A.'s and over one hundred and twenty B.A.'s. The College has often been third on the list of men's and women's colleges in Ireland, and first of the women's. It has often won the first place in first-class honours, especially in English and modern languages, for which Victorians are famous, a fame which is due to the splendid teaching they receive from University-trained English and foreign lecturers. Teaching and scholarship, the high standard of which is proved by the fact that two of the lecturers have been appointed at Royal Holloway College, and that one, Miss Brittain, M.A., herself a pupil of the College, has been elected Assistant Examiner on the Royal University.

In music and drawing, too, there is a goodly record in the Honour and Pass Lists of the London College of Music Trinity College, London; the senior and junior divisions of the Royal College and Royal Academy, London; and in the South Kensington examinations for drawing.

Most of the pupils have proved that "the true measure of a right to knowledge is the capacity of receiving it." May we not add, "the keenness to enlarge it and the faculty of using and imparting it," which is so marked in the students' after-life?

Vast is the number of those whose whole lives have been fashioned or influenced, directly, or indirectly, by Mrs. Byers' work.



By Sybil Reid

THIS is a story of Love and War,
These people lived in the days of yore.
Heigho! in the days of yore!

Lieutenant Bang served the King at sea,
A mariner gallant and brave was he.
Heigho! for the King at sea!

And Ensign Flittermouse, smart and gay,
Served the King ashore in another way.
Heigho! in a martial way.

And SHE was lovely and slim and fair,
With a peach-like face and beautiful hair:
Heigho! such beautiful hair!

Of course the result we can all foretell,
They quarrelled for love of Mademoiselle,
Heigho! for Mademoiselle!

The Navy and Army at Cupid's call,
Went to settle the case with a pistol ball.
Heigho! with a pistol ball!

But the ensign's aunt came up at the point,
And put the whole affair out of joint.
Heigho! at the crucial point.

She led him away with a gentle hand,
The poor little man was quite unmanned,
Heigho! with her gentle hand!

"Oh ma'am!" he said, with a blanching cheek,
("By George! but that was a narrow squeak!")
Heigho! for a soldier's cheek!

"My dear, you are very young," quoth she,
"Wait till you grow as tall as me!"
Heigho! as tall as she!

"Wait till you come to forty year,
And then you can fight for your love, my dear!
Heigho! at forty year!

. . . . And far away in a distant nook,
Lieutenant Bang with a single look,
Heigho! in a distant nook!

Was winning the maiden of his desire,
Though they both kept getting shyer and shyer.
Heigho! shyer and shyer!

Heigho! young hearts! (and old ones
too!)
Lovely and loveless, what would you do?
Heigho! what would you do?

She married her sailor brave and free,
Who served King George on King George's sea.
Heigho! for the King at sea!

And Flittermouse did what they told him to,
And kept his pistol for Waterloo.
Heigho! for Waterloo!

And won his laurels at Mont St. Jean,
And was made a Colonel by Wellington.
Heigho! by Wellington!

So we bid good-bye to the soldier brave,
Who fought wherever the colours wave.
Hats off! when the colours wave!

THE END.

GOLD-SHOT GREY

By JOHN OXENHAM,

Author of "Princess Vascovy," "Twixt Christmas Eve and Christmas Day," Etc.

Illustrated by MALCOLM PATTERSON.

IN TWO PARTS.

PART II.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTMAS DAY.

TWO o'clock of the afternoon of Christmas Day found the little house in Camp Street in a high fever of suppressed welcome. Everything was ready. Outside, a thin yellow fog drifted sadly along the street, like the remnant of a ghostly army, seeking admission at every door and window. Now it hung round the steps on the chance of stealing in, then prowled sulkily along when the door was slammed in its face, and brought wherever it went, a twilight obscurity which was many hours ahead of time, and a smarting contraction of vision, and a harassment of the breathing organs, which centred all the joy of living round the hearthrug and the blazing fire.

Very bright and cheerful looked the front parlour of No. 33, with the blinds drawn down, and the curtains drawn close to shut out all remembrance of the fog, and the steady red glow from the shaded lamp mingling with the leaping yellow flames from the little round logs in the fire place, which brought unction to Philippa's artistic soul.

The blended lights bronzed the shimmering green of the holly and turned the red berries redder still, and set them twinkling and laughing as though they knew things not generally known, while the plump white berries of the mistletoe stood out like the wide unwinking eyes of surprised little spinsters on the track of a pair of lovers, shocked at such carryings-on but determined to miss nothing.

Below, the table spread for the perfect number, gleamed and sparkled like a picture; with its snowy, treasured damask, its silver forks and spoons—relics, with the linen, of the good old times, the times before the flood—its frugal wealth of winter blooms, golden-fringed chrysanthemums and tawny-brown and white; its tiny tempting rolls nestling in the deftly folded napkins; and the polished bent-wood tops of the seven cane chairs, laughing and winking across at one another as though anxious for the feast to begin. Inside the fender stood a bottle of claret, dreaming of sunny lands, and down by the side of the sewing machine lounged a haughty aristocrat of a bottle with a small golden head, and a big white waistcoat—a member of the peerage in high disdain at his unusual proximity to a representative of the working classes.

Truly a wonderful Christmas-box was the one that came from the bank. If the officials had been invited to dine at No. 33, Camp Street, themselves, they could hardly have provided more thoughtfully.

And in the tiny back room, things were even gayer and brighter still. At its very worst, when lighted up and the backyard-scape outside was hidden from view, it was a bright little room. But now with fruit and flowers, and holly and mistletoe, it was a perfect bower of delight. No room

in all the land held brighter ornaments that day than the five fair-haired girls who sat there, resting from their labours, and awaiting the arrival of their guests. Big white aprons, flushed cheeks, and flying feet had been the order of the morning, and now, in their delicate colours, and invested with charms and graces beyond the compassing of wealth, they sat quietly and waited the summons of the knocker.

Now and again, like a beneficent fairy, Grace stole away to the kitchen to cast a watchful parental eye on the turkey just browning to a turn, and the ripe sausages just bursting their skins, and the potatoes beginning to find their close quarters irksome and kicking vigorously on the inside of the lid; and to change the position by half an inch or so of that other pan in which the Christmas pudding lay patiently awaiting the proud moment of triumphant martyrdom; and to cast an eye of pride over the tempting array of wonderful confections on the wooden dresser under the window.

Duster in one hand, for the opening of oven doors and the handling of pans, and delicate skirts gathered warily up in the other, she fluttered around for a minute or two, and then joined the others in the back parlour for a restless moment, and then back to the kitchen on some further apprehensive quest.

"I'm just about ready," said Grace at last, "I wonder how soon they'll be here?"

"Perhaps they've got lost in the fog," ventured Winnie, "it's getting awfully thick."

"Catch old Mr. Mac getting lost in the fog," said Phil, "and as for Gilbert Yorke, instinct will lead him here. I should think he could find his way blindfolded by this time."

"Is father to see him, Nell?" asked Nance.

"Yes, dear. I spoke to him this morning, and he agreed with me that Mr. Yorke would think it strange if he never got seeing him. But I am afraid he is not so well. He had a very bad night. I heard him tossing about a great deal. As soon as he is well enough we must try and get him away somewhere down South. We can do it now, thanks to the bank."

For that morning as she moved noiselessly about the sick man's room, slipping a bright-berried, prickly green sprig in here and a white-berried grey-green spray in there, just to give a Christmassy look to the room, Nell had said to her father,

"Father, don't you think you might see Mr. Yorke to-day when he comes, just for a minute or two?"

The sick man hesitated, and then with a sigh, said:

"Yes, dear, yes, if you wish, I don't think it matters much now."

She knew his meaning and the tears were not far from her eyes, nor from her voice.

"He has been so very kind in his inquiries and in other ways."

"Yes, dear, yes, I will see him."

He was weary of living, now that he had begun to lose hope of ever getting better. He had hitherto absolutely refused to see the office messenger, lest on hearing how very ill he was the authorities at the bank should get tired of waiting for the recovery which he himself had come at last to recognise as hopeless.

His sole thought had been for his girls. Day and night, especially in the long, lonely night watches, when thoughts become Inquisitors-General and put their victims to the torment, the thought of his girls left alone and unprovided for had racked him with a torture to which bodily suffering was almost a relief. He had drunk deep of this bitter cup, the dregs alone remained, and the cup was tilting high, and he knew it.

He had done badly for them, his sweet, bright lassies. Their present and their future had alike been sacrificed to the one idea of his life. It had ruined his own life, and it had ruined theirs. His sunken eyes wandered sadly round the walls, brightened a trifle as they rested pleasurably on Nell's graceful figure, then closed as his thoughts turned upward in the prayer that was ever in his heart and often on his lips—"My God, my God, what will become of my girls!"

He lay back on his pillows, shrunken and passive, the worn-out shell of an unattained ambition.

"Here they come, or some of them!" cried Nan, as the knocker sounded. "Now, who is it? Old or young? Quick,—guess! we may as well get some excitement out of them."

"Old!"—"Young!"—"Young!"—"Old!"

Nell did not guess. She knew.

"Run along, Nan. Don't keep him waiting in the fog," she said. "It's Mr. Macfie; I can hear him sneezing."

"What's the first thing he'll say?" asked Nan, popping her head in again,—"Beastly fog? or Merry Christmas?——"

Nell jumped up to go herself, but Nan blocked her with the door and ran to admit the old man.

"Ah-ti-shoo!" sneezed Mr. Macfie, as he crossed the threshold.

"Same to you, Mr. Mac, and many of them!" laughed Nan.

"It's just a wee bit thick outside," said Mr. Macfie, squeezing the fog out of his eyes with his handkerchief. She helped him off with his great-coat, and hung up his hat for him.

"My! but ye look bonnie and bright and warm inside here," he said, as he entered the back parlour and shook hands with them all. "Ye're just like a bouquet of flowers. I wish you all a very Happy Christmas. Nell, my dear, how's the father?—Not so well. Ah, this weather'll be against him, I doubt. And where's Mr. Gilbert Yorke? Not got lost in the fog I hope?"

"He'll turn up all right," said Nan. "Mr. Gilbert Yorke is a young man of excellent discrimination, and knows his way about. That's him!" as the knocker sounded once more. "Now, girls, what's the first thing he'll say?—Quick! Nell will have my ber-lood if I keep him waiting?"

The others laughed at Nan's invincible determination to turn their guests into guessing competitions, and as old Mr. Mac looked round the smiling circle his eye twinkled, and he asked, "Ah, and how did I fulfil your expectations?"

"Betting was about even on your saying 'Beastly fog' or 'Merry Christmas," and all you said was 'Ah-ti-shoo!'"— and as Nell made signs of a move, Nan sped to the door.

"Good evening, Miss Nancy," said Gilbert Yorke's hearty voice. "Pax Vobiscum, and a Happy Christmas to you all!"

"Quite a pastoral visitation," said Nan, beaming on him. "Same to you, Mr. Yorke. What a horrible day it is?"

"Horrible?" he said, as he hung up hat and coat. "Not a bit of it——" his eye caught Nell's as he entered the room and greeted them all—"It's the brightest day I've seen this year. In fact I don't ever remember a brighter, warmer, sunnier day. May we none of us ever see a worse! Mr. Macfie, is it you who've been libelling the day?"

"Not a bit of it, my boy. I did remark that it was a wee bit thick outside, and maybe I used a bit of Gaelic on the top step, but the young ladies took it for sneezing, and I wouldn't undeceive them for the world. I'll just step upstairs and see your father for half a crack, my dear," he said, turning to Nell.

As they went up the stair Grace looked out of the kitchen enveloped now in a great white apron from neck to foot.

"Five minutes," she whispered ominously.

"Or take the consequences," echoed Philippa, who was bearing a hand in the galley, to use her own expression.

The back parlour door was discreetly closed on the entertainment of Master Gilbert Yorke by Nan and Winnie, and for five minutes the galley and the back passage were resonant of the subdued clatter of pots and pans, broken ejaculations in whispers and the hurried footsteps of burden bearers. Then a tap on the door, and——

"Dinner is served," announced Philippa. "Will your highnesses do yourselves the extreme kindness of proceeding to the table."

The dainty tastefulness of that little dinner table afforded Gilbert Yorke extreme satisfaction. He took in all its points with a perceptive eye, and appreciated them to the full, and it is a question if he had ever enjoyed a dinner so much in all his life as he enjoyed that one.

"Well, Mr. Macfie," he asked, gaily, as they were nearing the end of the repast, "what about the Club? I do believe your inmost soul is hankering after its tawdry splendours."

"Hech, don't mention it!" said the old man, "it's fair sacrilege. My dears," he said, beaming round upon them from the head of the table, and struggling to his feet with old-fashioned ceremony, "I have eaten almost as many Christmas dinners as all of you put together——"

"Oh, Oh!" from Nancy and Phil and Gilbert Yorke.

"——And I say from a full heart that never in the whole course of my experience have I enjoyed any Christmas dinner as I have enjoyed this one."

"Hear, hear!" from Gilbert Yorke.

"It is not simply that the fare has been most excellent"—with a bow to the blushing Grace,—"but chiefest of all, and far above everything else, is the fact that every bite I have taken has whispered to a lonely man's heart its little tale of peace and goodwill—of loving forethought and sweet and gentle kindliness, to which my life has been too much a stranger. And when I look round upon the—er— evidence of extreme and dainty taste, of the skill and capacity here put forth, and upon the sweet and modest faces of you who have put your loving hands and brains and hearts to such good service on our behalf, I say, my dears, that if you have not got everything you might wish to have, you have within you more than most who have got more than you may have of this world's gear. With my whole heart I thank you, each and all of you. With my whole heart I say—God bless each and all, and especially my dear old friend upstairs, whose great regret it is that he cannot be with us this day."

"Hear, hear, hear, hear!" said Gilbert Yorke, impressively. "May I echo every word Mr.

Macfie has said. I feel it all just exactly as he does, but I could not have said it as nicely to save my life."

The bright flower-faces were over-run with blushes at this sudden and unexpected outbreak on the old man's part, but the bright eyes sparkled still more brightly at these high appreciations of their efforts.

Then Gilbert Yorke got quietly on to his feet and said:

"I will ask you all to stand up and join me in the best of all Christmas toasts—

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears! God bless us!"—did his eyes seek the grey ones across the table, and catch just a glint of them as the long, dark lashes fell?

And as all the glasses met and tinkled merrily together like a tiny peal of bells, he added "God bless us every one!"

Then they adjourned to the back parlour for tiny cups of the inimitable Craigie coffee, which the gentlemen asserted was absolutely unrivalled in the whole of London. And Nan's hardly-purchased cigarettes were produced, and at the united and urgent request of the family, Gilbert Yorke and Mr. Macfie consented to smoke, and presently pronounced them excellent.

Then, while the younger folk roasted chestnuts on the fire, and burned fingers and faces hauling them out whenever they fell in, and Mr. Macfie and Grace sat bending over to watch them, and to nibble such choice pickings as were tendered them, Nell went to the piano and sang Scotch ballads, which made the old man's eyes swim bright with memories of former days, and Gilbert Yorke sat near and watched her.

And after a time the singing ceased, and these two fell into quiet talk, and presently Nell said to him—

"Father thought he would be able to see you to-day, Mr. Yorke, for a few minutes. Shall we go up now?"

"I shall be very glad if you are sure he will be none the worse for it."

"I think it may cheer him. He gets very low-spirited."

And he followed her up the stairs.

The room Nell led him into was a very remarkable one.

It was of considerable size—the width of the house in fact—and lighted by two long windows, which gave on to the street, and must in ordinary weather have made the room bright and cheerful, but which were now hidden behind blinds and curtains. The sick man's bed was in the corner opposite the windows and close alongside the fire-place, where a cheerful little fire blazed. On a table strewn with books and papers, drawn up by the bedside, glowed a shaded lamp alongside a china bowl of chrysanthemums.

But it was the wall decorations which attracted Yorke's curiosity, and drew his eyes to them in spite of himself. On the end wall, farthest from the bed and near the door by which they had entered, hung two complete suits of armour, and between them the full-length portrait of a man in Highland dress.

Round the room were other similar paintings—all of men, and mostly in the national costume, except one of a strikingly beautiful girl of about twenty, and when Gilbert Yorke's eyes rested on it he turned and looked at Nell, who noticed and smiled. And the remarkable thing about all the portraits was that, though they were very evidently of different people and painted at different periods, there ran through them all a striking family likeness, and the strange likeness culminated in the portrait above the bed, and in the sick man who sat propped up with pillows in the bed below, arrayed in an old shooting jacket. Allowing for some difference in age, and for the wear and tear of a long illness, the likeness between the two was still most striking.

Between the portraits on the wall hung a variety of strange relics—basket-hilted swords—leather target shields with spikes and fringes and brass bosses—swords and pistols of later date and of foreign make, and vicious-looking spurs.

Yorke went straight to the bed when he entered the room. It was only bit by bit, as he sat there, that these things impressed themselves on him.

"Well, Mr. Craigie, I am very glad to see you again," he said.

The sick man nodded and scrutinised him from under his shaggy grey brows.

"You have been very kind, very kind, Mr. Yorke," he said at last, "in coming so regularly to inquire after me. It must have been much of a tax on you. And you have given my girls great pleasure, too. I thank you."

"The pleasure has been mine, Mr. Craigie, I assure you."

"Let me see, you were not in our department I think," said the sick man.

"No, I was under Mr. Penfold's wing then. But I'm being shifted about from pillar to post just now, picking up what I can, and getting a general idea of things. I may go abroad later on."

"Ah!"—the sick man heaved a weary sigh. He too was going abroad, but on a longer voyage than the other.

Nell had flitted quietly out of the room, and Yorke's eyes stole away to her counterfeit presentment on the wall, as the next best thing to look upon. Then he became aware that the sick man's eyes were fixed on himself.

"That is a very good likeness," he said.

"Yes," said Mr. Craigie, "who is it?"

"Your daughter, isn't it?"

He had touched the old man's secret spring.

"That is Ellen de la Rocherelle, sixth Countess of Gowrie," he said, with sudden fire. "Nell is very like her, as you say. This"—nodding towards the portrait over the bed—"is Archibald, the ninth Earl, and I, if I had my rights, would be the present Earl of Gowrie, and my girls—My God, my God!—I have brought them all to poverty through trying to get them their rights and my own."

He sank back with his eyes closed and lay quite still.

"Forgive me," he said at last, "the thought of it all is helping to kill me, but there is no need to trouble you with it."

"Mr. Craigie," said the younger man quietly, "I am glad you have told me your trouble. Perhaps I can help."

The sick man beat his hand on the counterpane.

"No," said Yorke, "I don't mean in that way. Titles are nothing to me, but your daughter Nell is all the world. Listen one moment. But I must beg of you to keep it as between ourselves, and not say a word to her. This is for your own comfort, if it may be so. I am fairly well off. My father left me close upon a thousand a year. I have no higher hope or wish than to share it with Nell, and I will see to the comfort of all the others too, for they are all very dear to me."

The sick man struggled up again to a sitting posture, and stretched a feeble hand to the younger man, who grasped it warmly.

"Thank God for your coming here! Death has no terrors for myself. My fears were all for my girls. I can die happy if I know they are safe."

"Oh, but we won't talk of dying," said Yorke cheerily. "You must go away to the South, and get new life into you."

"Thank God! Thank God!" murmured Mr. Craigie, lying back again among his pillows and gazing hungrily at the other. But he was thinking not of himself but of his girls, the weight of

"GILBERT YORKE GOT ON HIS FEET, 'A MERRY CHRISTMAS TO US ALL. GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE.'"—(*p.* 152.)

whose future had been so suddenly lifted from his soul by a few words from this calm-faced, straight-eyed young man who sat so quietly by his bedside.

Gilbert heard a footstep in the passage.

"Please don't say a word to her yet. I dare not risk all my hopes by speaking too soon."

"Well, have you two tired one another out?" asked Nell cheerily, as she came into the room.

"Mr. Yorke has done me good," said her father.

"I hope he will come again and see me."

Then they went downstairs to the others, and the sick man's eyes looked out upon his ancestors with a new light in them, and his heart was filled with a sense of peace to which it had long been a stranger.

The afternoon and evening passed all too quickly, in pleasantest of chat on books and men and things. Both Gilbert Yorke and Mr. Macfie had travelled in their time, and had many a quaint and humorous story to tell; while Nell, and Nan, and Philippa, were all skilled musicians and the possessors of sweet and well-trained voices, and contributed their quota to the evening's enjoyment.

A white stone day for all of them. For Gilbert Yorke it would have been quite enough to sit in a corner and quietly watch Nell's tactful management of her household, and for each of them the clock struck the hour of departure all too soon.

In one of their little asides at the piano, Nell turned to him and said, "Will you convey a note of thanks from me to the proper quarters, Mr. Yorke? Your people at the bank have been most kind, and I would like those responsible to know that their kindness is appreciated. I shall be able now, the first fine day that comes, to take father down to the South. I thought of Bournemouth. I shall have everything ready and take the first chance."

"I am very glad," said Yorke. "I hope it may do him good. I will take your note with pleasure, and will see that it reaches the right hands. If I can be of any service to you I hope you will let me know."

"Thanks! I know just what to do. I was planning it out all night."

So the brightest Christmas Day Gilbert Yorke had ever enjoyed ended and became for him a sacred memory.

CHAPTER VII.

GOLDEN THREADS AMONG THE GREY.

THREE days later came a soft, mild day, such as Nell had expressed a wish for, and Yorke wondered if she had taken advantage of it, and got Mr. Craigie away. He walked over in the evening and found that she had, and also taken little Winnie with her.

Nan and Phil were ruling the house in the highest of spirits, and enjoying to the full the temporary emancipation from even Nell's gentle authority. But Gilbert missed the sweet grey eyes, and the graceful, gentle presence, which for him transformed the narrow little house, into a palace of delight—a temple—a shrine.

Two days later, while he was busy entering up some figures in a big ledger, he was informed by one of the bank attendants that a lady desired to speak to him, and in one of the private waiting rooms he found Nan, in her natty fur toque and collarette. She sprang up to meet him, wild-eyed and pale, and without a word handed him a telegram from Bournemouth, which said simply, "Father died this morning. Ask Mr. Macfie to come to me."

"Mr. Macfie went to Scotland last night," said Nan tremulously, "and we do not know what to do."

His hand went out to hers in a brotherly grip. "I will go," he said. "It was good of you to come straight to me," and within a couple of hours he had obtained leave of absence, had sped westwards in a cab for his portmanteau, and was in the train on his way to Bournemouth.

He booked a room at a small hotel in the west end, and then set off for the Alum Chine Road, found the house, and asked for Miss Craigie.

He was shown into a meagrely-furnished little parlour, and presently the door opened and Nell entered. She stopped short, taken aback at sight of him, and a tinge of colour swept over her pale face, but the sweet grey eyes gave him welcome through the shining of many tears.

"I am so sorry," he said, holding her cold hand in both his for a moment. "Mr. Macfie left for Scotland last night, and Nan was good enough to come to me at the bank with your telegram. You must permit me to undertake everything for you."

"It is very good of you. But can you spare the time?"

"I have got a week's leave."

He had supper with them; poor little Winnie pale and scared at her first meeting with the Great Healer, for her mother had died while she was still a baby, and sad at the unexpected termination of what had promised to be a novel and joyous holiday. Then, begging Nell to trust everything entirely to him, he went back to his hotel, and bruised and sore as Ellen Craigie's

heart was at the sudden snapping of the life-long links, it was not so utterly cast down as she said to herself it ought to have been, and she was inclined to chide herself for an unfilial lack of desolation. But she was only learning that greatest of lessons, that Sorrow and Death and Love are but ministries of the higher life; that loss and gain run through life with linked hands, and that Love outlasts and conquers all.

Gilbert Yorke relieved her of every care and responsibility. She was very grateful to him, and the white flower of her heart turned to him like a lily towards the sun.

The evening after the funeral he was sitting with her in their room in the little house in the Alum Chine Road. Winnie had gone to bed, and they two were alone.

"I have a message for you from the bank," he said. "I saw the Chief before coming away, and he asked me to tell you how highly they had all thought of Mr. Craigie, and as a mark of their respect they authorised me to say that your father's salary would be continued throughout the year."

Nell burst into tears, for the thought of the future had begun to appal her, as her heart recovered from the first suddenness of their loss.

"It is very, very good of them," she said, through her grateful tears. "And you, my friend; how can we ever thank you for all your kindness?"

He was at her side in a moment with her hand in his, speaking quickly and eagerly, and his voice thrilled her heart strings and set them all humming to the grand old tune.

"Nell, dear, give me the right to look after you always!"

She raised her eyes, shining like stars, to his, and he bent and kissed her.

CHAPTER VIII.

A GOLDEN THOUGHT.

IT was just a year since they all met at that memorable Christmas dinner in Camp Street, and here was Christmas come round again, but bringing with it no prospects of any undue enjoyment to the four who still found home in the dingy little house at No. 33.

Nell and Gilbert had been married just a month, for Nell would not consent sooner. They were away on the Continent somewhere, but had hoped and promised to be back in time to keep Christmas with the girls.

But here was Christmas Eve, and still no word of their home-coming, and the four in Camp Street had brought their minds to the spending of a depressingly quiet Christmas Day.

The hamper was late as usual, and their interest in it, compared with the excitement of last year, was about in the ratio of ginger-beer to champagne. And when Nan, with an undisguised yawn, asked in the words of a popular comedian, "What's the good of anyfink?" Philippa's prompt reply very adequately expressed the feelings of the household.

Even Mr. Macfie had been unable to respond to their invitation to dine with them on Christmas Day, and on the whole they were not sorry. "We can at all events take things easy," said Nan, "and browse upon the memories of the past."

Both she and Phil looked tired to-night, and Phil had already expressed her intention of stopping in bed till mid-day, both on Christmas Day and Bank Holiday.

"Journalism is no end of a fag, there's no doubt about that," she said with a *blasé* professional air, and an echo of Nan's yawn, "but all said and done it's better than teaching. So count me out till one o'clock, Housekeeper."

"I'll bring you up some breakfast," said Grace, "and you can both lie as long as you like."

"My assignment," said Phil.

"Sounds like an editorial command," said Nan.

Through the influence of a friend of a friend of Gilbert Yorke's they had got a trial appointment on a small ladies' paper early in the year, and they had toiled so indefatigably, and brought so much intelligence and vivacity to their work, that the editress thanked heaven daily—or did the editorial equivalent of that—and sighed only at thought of the not far distant time when their eyes would be opened to their true and proper value, and they would spread their wings and soar beyond her reach.

It was hard work, very hard work, but it was work that suited them, and they revelled in it for the very work's sake.

There came a knock on the street door.

"Run, Win, my child, it's the hamper I expect," said Nan, "here's sixpence for the man."

It was the Christmas hamper. The man shambled in and deposited it in the hall, and croaked the usual anticipatory benediction.

"I believe those men get bad colds on purpose at Christmas time," said Phil, "and loiter about all day so that your compassion may be excited into the giving of extra tips because they have to work so hard and so late."

"That's not a very Christmassy thought," said Grace, "I always feel sorry for them."

"Of course you do, my dear, and don't they know it?"

"You're becoming quite a hardened man of the world, Phil," said her sister smiling.

There came another knock on the door.

"Do it again, my child," said Nan to Winnie. "That will be hamper Number Two."

But it was only the postman, and the letter was on the door mat by the time Winnie got there.

"It's only a letter," said Winnie, handing it to Grace.

"Rent, rates, gas," said Phil oracularly.

"Nell at last," said Grace, opening the letter with a welcoming smile.

"Well!" she gasped, looking round at them in wide-eyed wonder.

"Are they coming?" asked Nan.

"Read away, old lady, we'll help you out whatever the trouble is," said Phil.

"It's from Brussels," said Grace. "Listen!"

"We lingered in Rome so long that we shall barely manage to get home in time for Christmas. But Gilbert has set his heart on a family Christmas party, and he is a masterful young man, and for myself, you know that nothing will give me more joy than to be with you all again.

"However, to come straight to the point, my masterful young man has a way of making plans of his own—very delightful ones generally—and of carrying them out in his own way, and he has ordered me——"

"Love, honour, *and* obey!" murmured Nan.

"——to give you the following instructions, which you are to follow to the letter——"

"Masterful youth!" said Phil.

"——On receipt of this letter you are each of you to go straight upstairs and pack up your best frills and furbelows (his own words, my dears). On Christmas morning at 10 o'clock you will send for a cab, pack your boxes on top and yourselves inside (put on your warmest wraps), and tell the man to drive you to the Metropole in Northumberland Avenue. Ask for the manager, and say you want Mr. Gilbert Yorke——"

"Shut your eyes and open your mouth and see what the gods will send you," said Phil.

"I see visions of delight," said Nan, "theatres, operas,—pantomimes, Winnie, my child!"

Winnie's eyes sparkled.

"——If the Christmas hamper has arrived, make somebody else happy with it, and leave the house in charge of Mrs. Macgregor till you get back. Tell her it may be several days——"

"Glory!" from Phil.

"What appointments have we for day after Bank Holiday, Phil?" asked Nan in a business-like tone.

"First night, Drury Lane."

"Oh well, we'll probably be there anyhow. Master Gilbert is evidently going to do a buster, and we may as well humour him. He could not possibly find better objects on whom to squander any superfluous wealth he may have left over from his honeymoon."

"——Now, no more till I see you, my dears, which I am longing to do,—Your loving Nell."

"Up we go," said Nan, "to pack the frills and furbelows as per instructions. Phil, my boy, no long lie for you in the morning. We'll have to be up with the lark or the robin, or whatever foolish thing makes a point of getting up early in winter time."

"Milkman," suggested Phil, and gave a musical "Ke-oh!" in imitation of that warrior's war whoop, which generally fretted her Sunday morning dreams.

"Who shall we give the hamper to?" queried Grace.

"Wanted—someone to accept a Christmas hamper," said Nan. "Try the Burtons next door, Grace. I'm always sorry for them. She's so awfully thin, and I can hear him coughing through the wall half the night."

"Yes, we'll ask them if they'll accept it. We won't have time to try round many places. We'll have about as much as we can do to leave everything tidy."

"Fancy Grace lugging a Christmas hamper from door to door, and being refused admittance everywhere," said Phil. "Say girls! let's put it quietly on their doorstep and knock and run away. And let's do it now!"

"They'll all be in bed, and it would probably give poor Mr. Burton his death of cold. It will do in the morning," decided Grace. "Now you'd better get to your packing, and just try, you two, to remember not to leave anything out you are likely to want. I'll see to Winnie's."

"Try—remember—not leave out—anything—likely—want!" and murmuring this incantation to themselves, Nan and Phil drifted away upstairs, and Grace bolted the front door, and turned out the lights, and followed them.

They were up before the milk next morning, and Nan and Phil, with their spirits away up above par, and with never a trace of the weary

journalist between the pair of them, proceeded to unpack the hamper, just to make sure that no hundred pound notes were lying around, and then carefully repacked it, and put on a fresh label, "For Mrs. Burton, 34 Camp Street, With Best Wishes for a Happy Christmas."

Then, with much tugging and straining, which made their faces rosier than ever in the sharp frosty air, they managed to get it over the low partition wall between the doorways, and set it fair and square on the Burton's top step. Then they rang a sharp double knock on the Burton's knocker, and slipped back inside their own door, keeping just a crack open, though indeed they could hear through the wall pretty well all that went on.

For quite a long time nothing whatever happened, and Phil was on the point of slipping out to repeat the knock, when they heard the sound of a small boy's feet coming slowly along the passage. He opened the door and for a full minute stood silent, transfixed evidently at sight of the hamper. Then he turned and scuttled away down the passage. But by the time he had reached the staircase he had begun to doubt the evidences of his own senses. Back he came in a hurry to the door to make quite sure that the hamper was a real hamper, and that it was still there.

"I'd give half-a-shilling for a sight of his face," whispered Phil.

Then away tore the small boy, leaving the front door wide, and presently he returned with his sister Maggie, a year older than himself.

"Now ! ! !" said the discoverer of treasure, in such a tone of triumphant benefaction as the Queen might have used in declaring the Great Exhibition duly open to an admiring world.

"Oh-h-h-h!" said the little sister, and then after a breathless pause, "Tommy, it's a mistake."

"'Tain't neither," said Tommy scornfully, "it's a Christmas hamper."

"NAN STEPPED FORWARD VALIANTLY AND MOUNTED THE LADDER."—(*p.* 159.)

"But it can't belong to us, Tommy. It'll be for them next door. They always gets hampers and things. Mother said last year they got two."

"And we didn't have none," wailed Tommy. "'Tain't fair!"

"There's a ticket on it," he said suddenly.

"Where? let's see!" and she slowly spelled out the label.

Then "Oh My Goodness Gracious Me!" and Maggie tore along the passage, and up the staircase, and they heard her hammering violently on her mother's door, while Master Tommy made sure of the non-disappearance of the hamper by perching himself proudly on top of it.

It was some time before the father and mother came down. They had evidently been fast asleep, and Grace came to tell Nan and Phil that breakfast was ready and they had no time to lose.

"I'd sooner lose my breakfast for a week than the rest of this story," said Phil with energy.

They came down presently, Mrs. Burton first, then Maggie carrying the baby, and Mr. Burton bringing up the rear, coughing badly as he always did first thing in the morning.

Little Mrs. Burton ran to the hamper and looked carefully all over it. What a beautiful hamper it was! There was ever so much more in it to that worn little woman than Nan and Phil had any idea of, though they had been all through it, and she saw only the outside—and, ah, yes—ever so much more! She read the label, and then—right there on the door-step—she fell on her knees, and put her arms round it, and kissed it, and then, with her eyes and her voice full of grateful tears, she jumped up and kissed her husband, and Tommy, and Maggie and the baby.

"Oh, Tom!" she cried to her husband, "it's from him. I knew it would come sooner or later. Thank God, it's come! He's come round at last, just as I said he would. Didn't I always keep on saying he'd come round sooner or later, Tom?"

"You did, Meg, you did," coughed her husband, "but I'd given up hoping for it. It's been a long time coming."

"Better late than never, Tom. And after breakfast we'll all put on our things, and walk right out and thank him for his beautiful, beautiful present. It's the most beautiful thing I ever saw in the world."

Mr. Burton coughed gratefully, and said, "Suppose we get it inside." He had turned up his thin coat collar and put on a hat, and among them they got the hamper into the house.

The Burton door closed, and then the Craigie door was put quietly to, and with eyes unusually bright and shiny, Nan and Phil went in to breakfast.

Before they had finished, Mrs. Macgregor, their old charwoman, whom Winnie had been sent in search of, came in with her bundle, and the Burton cat, sitting on the ledge outside their front window, licking himself vehemently as though his share of turkey depended on his absolute cleanliness, suspended operations for a moment to gaze at her suspiciously, and to try to make out from her appearance, whether she was the kind of old woman who would climb over a back wall with broken glass on the top, and sneak into a kitchen, and steal choice bits of turkey which might have been put aside for a poor hard-working cat.

When Winnie, all in her Sunday best, ran out for a cab, the cat grew distinctly anxious, and if he could have got in would have gone to take a look at the turkey, to make sure that the girl with the flying hair had not carried it away under her cloak.

When the cab drove up and the two flat tin boxes were hoisted on to it, the cat grew frantic, and marched up and down the ledge in a state of bristling excitement. Who could tell what was inside boxes like those? Turkey without doubt. Why didn't some one come and stop them, and insist on having those boxes searched?

Then, just as the girls came out to go to the cab, the Burton door opened, and Maggie and Tom stood on the top step, swollen with pride and satisfaction, and the cat leaped down to them and did his very best to explain his ideas, and get them to do something.

But Tom and Maggie took no notice of him whatever, though he screwed himself violently in and out of their legs, and did his very best to communicate his fears. They just stood there and announced, as the girls passed down the steps,

"We've got a Christmas hamper too!"

"Have you, dears?" said Grace, smiling on them. "I'm so glad. A very merry Christmas to you all.'

"Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas!" shouted the children, dancing about on the door step.

And with this benediction ringing in their ears the cab drove off.

CHAPTER IX.

THEIR GOLDEN CHRISTMAS DAY.

THEY drove to the Metropole, as per the masterful young man's instructions, and Nan, assuming her most manly journalistic air, descended from the cab, and sauntered up the big steps, and demanded audience of the manager. While one of the hall porters, with an entrancing vision on his retina of a beautiful girl in a fur toque and collarette, was speeding in search of him, the other girls, impatient at the delay, descended also,

and streamed in after her, while another porter got down their boxes.

The manager appeared bowing and smiling.

"We want Mr. Gilbert Yorke," said Nan boldly.

"This way, Madam!" and he led the way to a sumptuous little sitting-room, where a cheerful fire puffed and blazed.

Without another word he left them there, and they waited patiently for Nell and Gilbert to put in an appearance.

"Perhaps they're not up yet," said Grace, "they may have arrived only late last night."

Nan sauntered to the window.

A four-in-hand with a team of spanking bays came rattling up the street, and rounded in to the hotel door with a graceful curve.

"Ah!" said Nan, with an envious sigh, "when I own the 'Queen' that's the kind of turn-out I shall have."

"Ah!" said Phil, "when you own the 'Queen,' I'll be Princess of Wales."

"Where does it go to?" asked Winnie, squeezing in between them.

"It doesn't go anywhere, my child, in that sense of the word. It belongs to some bloated aristocrat who uses it for his own private delectation. See the crest on the panel of the door, and the liveries and furs of Jeames and his fellow menial. It's extremely bad manners of these two young married people to keep their guests waiting in this fashion."

Then the door opened and the smiling manager appeared, and with a bow, said, "This way, ladies. Sorry to have kept you waiting so long."

He led them back by the way they had come—to the front hall—to the front door—and out of it.

Nan, stricken dumb with amazement, for pro- that they were being put out into the street.

But, standing on the step, to her amazement she saw their tin boxes just disappearing into the inside of the handsome coach they had been admiring. The footman closed the door.

The manager of the hotel said to him, "These are the ladies." The fur-collared coachman on the box touched his hat.

The fur-collared footman touched his hat, and backed deferentially before them towards the little step-ladder which led up to the near side of the box seat, and looked inquiringly from one to another to know which was going up first.

Nan, stricken dumb with amazement, for probably the first time in her life, and with, as she afterwards confessed, a ghastly fear at her heart that some hideous mistake was being made, stepped forward valiantly and mounted the ladder, expecting every moment to hear through the throbbing fulness in her ears an outcry from the hotel, proclaiming the mistake and requesting her to get down. The footman climbed up a step or two and tucked a great buffalo rug all round her knees and feet.

Then Phil, Grace, and Winnie were comfortably packed on the seat just behind them and smothered up in fur rugs and robes, while Nan bit her lips hard to keep from screaming. Then, "Right, George!" sung out the footman. And George tightened his hold on the reins, clicked cheerfully, drew his long lash gently over the leaders' tossing heads, by way of reminder, and with a preliminary jig on the part of the frolicsome horses, and a tuneful blast from a long silver horn, which the furry gentleman behind extracted from a long wicker funnel as soon as he had swung himself up to his perch, they were off, amid the appreciative comments of the knowing ones on the cab rank opposite, and an answering toot from a holly-decked locomotive on the bridge.

Along the Embankment, the leaders still inclined to show off terpsichoreally, and dancing along with clanking cross-bar and loose-hanging traces, then a tightening up as they passed New Scotland Yard ——

"They can't indict us for false pretences, anyhow," thought Nan. 'It's their mistake not ours, and in any case we seem to be in for a pleasant ride before they find it out, though we may have an unpleasant quarter of an hour at the other end, wherever that may be. But—it's—not—our —fault."

Then over Westminster Bridge, along Kennington Road, through Clapham and Balham, till the houses began to get further and further apart, and they began at last to feel that London lay behind them, though what might be in front was in every sense of the word beyond them.

And so at last out into the open country, where the trees stood white-furred and beautiful, and the hedges hung thick with gem-studded veils of fleecy gossamer, and the wide, white silence was unbroken save by the tinkling rattle of the harness of the mettlesome bays and the ring of their sixteen hoofs on the iron-bound road, and the glorious Christmas sun turned everything to frosted silver and dazzled them with its brightness.

As soon as they had shaken off the last of the town, the maestro in the bear-skin collar on the back seat slid his long attenuated horn into its resting place, bristled up the bearskin round his ears, and dropped his chin well into it, and dug his hands as deep into his pockets as the linings would permit, and then, with his eyes fixed in

a wide hypnotic stare on the coils of silky hair in front, tried his very hardest to snatch an uncomfortable nap. But the back seat of a coach doing fourteen miles an hour is not conducive to sleep, and after a while he gave it up as a bad job, and as he could not sleep himself proceeded to waken up the sleeping country again with lively blasts on the horn.

Nan began to feel the strain of the unusual silence. The others had evidently not yet recovered from their sudden elevation to the top of the four-in-hand. She would have given anything to be able to compare notes with them.

Under the peculiar circumstances of the case, the mistake that she felt certain had been made, and the discovery which was inevitable as soon as their destination was reached, she felt doubtful about addressing any remarks to the impassive George, whose purple-cold, clean-shaven face and unbending stiffness of manner were not calculated to invite conversation, and, besides, to tell the truth, she was just a little bit afraid of giving herself away. George, for his part, knew very much better than to speak until he was spoken to. At home, in the stable he was lord paramount, an autocrat of the deepest dye, but up on the box with his master's guests around him, and them ladies, he was simply a part of the machine, unless the invitation to unbend came from the other side.

But Nan felt that she must speak to some one or burst.

So she turned to Winnie on the seat behind and asked:

"Are you cold, dear?" And Winnie, who had not yet recovered her powers of speech, replied in a brief and polite negative. This as conversation was unsatisfying, and Nan proceeded to plunge wildly at the coachman.

"What is this place we are coming to, George?" she asked in her most man-of-the-world tone.

George started and touched his hat with his whip hand.

"That is Ewell, my lady, that's the old church. And yonder is Epsom."

"My lady!" said Nan to herself. "Who in Heaven's name am I supposed to be? This is becoming absolutely paralysing."

However, talk she must.

"How long will it take us to get there?" she asked, as if she knew all about it.

"We'll do it in a little better than half an hour more, my lady. The road's in fine condition and the horses are enjoying themselves. We're doing nigh thirteen miles an hour."

"Fine team," said Nan.

"Yes, my lady. Not a better in the country. My lord knows a good horse and he's proud of 'em."

"My lord! My lord!" said Nan to herself—"where are we getting to, and what will happen when we get there?"

"You did not come up this morning, did you?" she asked.

"No, my lady, we came up yesterday and put up for the night in Park Lane."

Four little words of a question might have solved her puzzle, but she didn't dare to speak them. She had been in agony lest Grace or Phil should ingenuously ask them, but now she knew that her assumption of an understanding of the situation would seal their lips.

Mr. George, too, was uncomfortable lest she should ask any direct questions upon subjects which he had received strict injunctions to be reticent about. Though, as he had said to himself, how the dooce he was not to answer if my lady chose to ask, the dooce only knew. So, to discourage any further attempts on his innocence, he touched up his leaders with the whip, and then made great display of concentrating all his energies on soothing their wild spirits again.

They woke up Ewell with a lively fanfaronade on the silver horn, and whirled through Epsom at a gallop, leaving with the townsfolk a fleeting impression of a team and turn-out which appealed even to their sophisticated senses as unusually good, and of a bevy of attractive faces and sparkling eyes which added to the brightness even of that exceptionally bright Christmas morning.

On again into the white, open, silent country, till they passed through Leatherhead and drew among the wooded hills with the sharply contrasting blacks and whites of naked trunks and feathery branches.

Nan had fallen into a deep brown study of their case—in which she had arrived at the conclusion that, if they were not the innocent victims of some stupid mistake, then Gilbert Yorke was playing a practical joke upon them of a most disastrously expensive character, and the former theory seemed to her the more likely—when she was roused from it by an unusually lively and finished solo on the horn by the gentleman on the back seat. Then George bent and took an extra good grip of the reins, and drew his whip lightly over the leaders' flanks and chirruped to the wheelers. She got just a glimpse of a red stone lodge, with very white curtains to the windows, and a very bright fire burning in the front room, and an old lady in a red cloak and hood curtsey-

ing behind the big white gate she had just opened, and they were dashing gallantly up a winding drive which rose with the hillside and tunnelled its way through the heart of a wood. Then round a corner, with the horn excelling all its previous efforts, and the panting bays stood quivering and snorting in their cloud of steam at the great stone entrance of a very great house.

"Now for the last scene in the comedy," said Nan to herself, "and then curtain! and in ten minutes we shall be tramping back down that avenue hiding our heads under our cloaks. I hope they won't be very nasty."

But the stumpy ladder clicked to under her feet, and she checked the impulse that was in her to beg George to drive them back to the nearest station, and scrambled down. She walked up to the leaders' heads to give them a congratulatory pat and to look into their startled swimming eyes and quivering red nostrils, and to gain an extra minute before the cataclysm.

Then the pretty curve of her mouth tightened and she walked round to join the others. The great front doors stood wide, and an elderly gentleman in a white neck tie, and the manners of a bishop, stood inviting them to enter.

They climbed the big stone steps leaden-footed, and the gentleman in black smilingly whispered, "Her ladyship awaits you within." Nan checked another impulse to whisper back, "Please tell her we're very sorry and we'll never do it again, if she'll forgive us this time."

Then they passed inside, and—tripping down the next flight of stone steps, with both hands stretched in eager welcome, and her sweet face all aglow with gladness—came their own dear Nell, just the same old Nell as of yore, and yet somehow changed, and not at all for the worse.

Winnie ran to her with a cry of delight, and Grace literally fell on her neck. Philippa gazed in speechless astonishment, and Nan, recovering, cried, "Ellen Craigie Yorke what is the meaning of all this?"

"It's all right, Nan, dear. There's Gilbert, you can take it out of him. How glad I am to see you all! Oh Nan, don't pinch, it's really me I assure you!"

"Who's pinching my wife?" asked Gilbert, coming down the steps with a beaming face.

"Am I awake?" asked Nan, "Would you mind pinching *me?*"

"Why certainly!" said he, and took her hand and wrung it till her fingers tingled, and then kissed her smartly.

'ELLEN CRAIGIE YORKE,' ASKED NAN, 'WHAT IS THE MEANING OF ALL THIS?'."—(*p.* 161.)

"Thank you so much!" she said, "that is the regular Camp Street grip. I am satisfied."

"Now, you two foolish young things, come along in out of the cold, and I will show you all to your rooms," said Nell, looking back from the inner hall.

She led them into the great hall, all hung with holly and mistletoe, and up the great carved staircase, and a couple of neat maids tripped along in front of them.

Their rooms were two cosy apartments in the front of the house, looking out almost due south over the soft white masses of the woods through which they had come, and away beyond them to the wintry hills.

The room allotted to Grace and Winnie, was all pale pink, and that in which Nan and Phil already found their box was all pale blue, and a door connected them. Never had the girls seen such delightfully cosy rooms—such a blending of extreme taste and perfect comfort. There were delicate hot-house flowers on the tables, and bright wood fires hissing and crackling on the brass dogs of the open hearths, and everywhere the brilliant winter sunshine.

The girls submitted to the little attentions of the maids, but they were too much accustomed to depend on themselves to need much assistance, and the attendants soon found their occupation gone.

"Tell Bassett we will be down for lunch in a quarter of an hour, Janet," said Nell, as they were quietly withdrawing.

"Yes, my lady," said one of the girls.

"Now, Ellen Craigie," said Nan, sitting down resolutely on the edge of the bed, when they had disappeared, "explain matters, if you please. Who are you, and where are we, and what does it all mean?"

Nell laughed rosily and happily.

"You poor dears, how puzzled you must have been, but the master would have it so, and I had to obey orders."

"And this is——?"

"Gilbert is Gilbert Yorke Dunstan, Lord Bereton."

"And you are really and truly Lady Bereton."

"Really and truly Lady Bereton, my dears, at your service."

"And this is——?"

"This is Grayswood, one of Gilbert's places."

"My dear," said Nan, springing up and kissing her, "you have done well, extremely well. Accept the united congratulations of your family."

"Has it made any difference in Gilbert?" asked Phil apprehensively.

"How do you mean, dear? Gilbert is just the same as he always was, only even nicer still, and we are just as happy as we could possibly be. I have only wanted one thing, and now I have it," and she looked lovingly round at them all.

"And when did you find it all out, Nell?" burst out Nan, Grace and Winnie being quite too much overcome to do anything but look at Nell with wondering eyes.

Nell laughed. "It was in Paris. At the hotel they persisted in addressing Gil as 'Milord,' and me as 'Milady,' but I put it down to their little ways. The third day, when we came in, a number of letters were lying on our table, and among them was one for Lord Bereton. When Gilbert saw it he laughed and went red, and looked at me like a school-boy caught in the act. Then he quietly ripped it open before my eyes and I said "Oh, Gil, that one's not for you!—and he said ——well, then it all came out, and he explained how he had insisted on working in his own bank under a part of his name for the purpose of getting a general insight into things from below, which he believed he never would have got from above, and no one knew who he was except Mr. Dale, the general manager, who was one of his trustees. Then he saw me that day I went to explain about father's illness, and then——you know the rest."

"It's splendid!" said Nan, "just—simply—splendid!"

"How pleased father would have been if he had only known," said Grace quietly. "I believe it was the thought of leaving us all unprovided for that prevented him getting better."

"No dear," said Nell, patting her hand, "Gilbert told father—part, not all—last Christmas day when he went up to his room after dinner. He told him he wanted to marry me and that he was fairly well off, and that he would look after all of us, but he made him promise not to say a word about it, because he was not quite sure then——"

"That you would take him for himself," said Nan.

And Nell smiled happily.

"What a great day we had," she said musingly. "Gil packed that box for us himself, and kept my letter of thanks too. What did you do with this year's hamper?"

They told her how they had disposed of it.

"We didn't feel very Christmassy yesterday till your letter came," said Nan. "Phil and I were going to stop in bed till dinner time to-day. Even Mr. Macfie couldn't come to have dinner with us."

"Mr. Macfie is downstairs with Gilbert. He knew him the first time he saw him, and Gilbert

had to bind him over to secrecy as they walked home together that first night they met."

"Well!" said Nan.

"There's the gong," said Nell, jumping up. "We'll all go down in a bunch, and you can congratulate Mr. Macfie on his powers of keeping a secret."

"My Lord of Burleigh," said Nan, as Gilbert and Mr. Macfie met them in the great hall, "I congratulate you—on your wife. No, thanks!" as he impulsively stretched out his hand to her, "I have been there before. My fingers have not recovered from the last time yet. Mr. Macfie, when I commit a murder I shall consult you professionally. You know how to keep a secret."

"Well I ought to by this time," chuckled the old lawyer, "I have had to keep a good many, but never as pleasant a one as this one."

After lunch they tramped merrily through the woods to the lake to try the ice, and decided to give it two more days before taking any risks, and incidentally it may be mentioned that, on the next morning but one, each of the girls found a new pair of acme skates lying alongside her boots outside her room door.

Then they rambled through the great house, inspecting its treasures of pictures and books and curios, and filled in the time before dinner with a long delightful chat in Nell's own boudoir.

Dinner in a house like Grayswood was a great and sumptuous function, and to little Winnie somewhat of a trying ordeal, but when it was over, and they still lingered over dessert, and at a sign from Gilbert, Bassett of the bishop-like manners, and the other solemn attendants had withdrawn, old Mr. Macfie said thoughtfully, "Well, Master Gilbert, your hospitality is unleemited, and this has been a day to be remembered, but I make bold to confess that to my thinking our last Christmas dinner still holds the record."

"Yes," said Gilbert, with hearty agreement, "there never was such a Christmas dinner as that, and I doubt if there ever will be again."

"I wouldn't go so far as to say that," said the old man drily, "in the times to come ye'll maybe——"

"Will you all join me again in the Christmas toast," said Gilbert, rising suddenly.

"A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears, God bless us." And as all the glasses met and tinkled merrily together like a tiny peal of bells, he added, "God bless us everyone."

Four days later, Grace and Nan ran up to town, the one to pay a flying visit to No. 33 Camp Street, and the other to pour oil on troubled editorial waters.

As Grace stood knocking at the door, in the endeavour to attract Mrs. Macgregor's attention in the kitchen, little Tommy Burton came out to his front door to see what all the noise was about.

"Hullo!" said Tommy, "You come back?"

"Yes, Tommy, I've come back, but only for the day."

"You going to live in the country too?" asked Tommy.

"Yes, we're going to live in the country for a time."

"And we're going to live in the country too," said Tommy.

"Oh? that's good news," said Grace, smiling at him, and knocking at her own obdurate door.

"Yes, we've got a grandpa now, an' he's got a house wiv a garden in front, and we're going to live wiv him. It was him sent us that hamper on Christmas day," said Tommy.

"I'm so glad," said Grace, and then her own door opened, and she went inside.

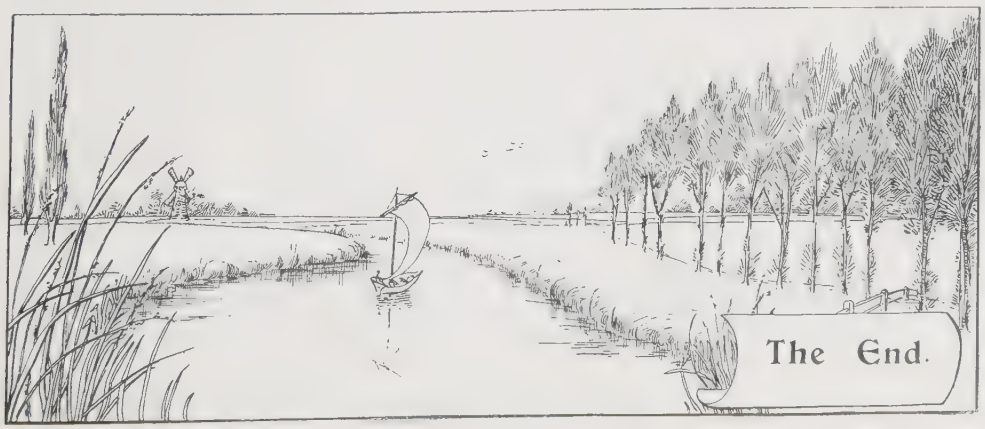


Photo. R. W. Thomas.

RADLEY COLLEGE'S GRAND TUCK SHOP

Our Brothers' Tuck Shops.

Being the story of how one girl learnt the secret of her brother's Tuck Shop.

By EVELYN SHARP.

Sometimes, I feel I cannot bear to be a sister another minute. You have to please so many people, if you are a sister. It begins the moment you wake in the morning, when you naturally complain that you got up first yesterday morning, and are immediately reminded by Nurse that you ought to set an example to the younger ones. Bob is a whole year older than I am, but nobody ever expects *him* to set an example to the younger ones; and I am sure they would like his example much better than mine. It is the same thing, all day long. Just because I am a girl, I have to be as dull and as proper as a person's aunt; and all the while I am obliged to convince Bob that I am not a bit like a real aunt, or else he would never stop jeering at me. No wonder boys think that girls are sneaks! You don't have to be a sneak if you are a boy, because people leave you alone, and you can be natural. But Bob never sees that. All the same, you do get the best of it, now and then, even when you are a sister; and Bob has never been quite so superior since I found out about his tuck shop.

THE TUCK SHOP OF STONYHURST COLLEGE.

Grown up people are always saying that great results spring from the smallest causes, or something like that. I never used to believe them; but I do now. If my father had not been made Dean of Kenbury, for instance, I should never have discovered Bob's tuck shop—and that proves it. You see, Bob goes to Kenbury School; and there are five hundred boys in it, and it is the most important

school in England; at least, so Bob says. At the same time, it is a beastly hole, and you never get anything to eat there, and you have no fun, but are over-worked as well as starved. At least, so Bob says. I must say I found it a little difficult to reconcile the opposite statements that he made about Kenbury; but I came to the conclusion that, on the whole, Bob was greatly to be pitied, and I used to send him chocolate cream by post, though, as he remarked, nobody had ever been kept alive by chocolate cream yet. Naturally, when I heard that we were going to live in Kenbury, I felt quite pleased to think that Bob need not be starved any longer.

"You can always sneak round to us for a meal," I pointed out to him.

Bob sighed. "No such luck," he said gloomily. "I should be cobbed."

"Then," I replied boldly, "I'll smuggle some grub round to your house for you."

Bob looked up, alarmed. "Look here," he said, "you musn't come hanging round the school, or anything. It—it's against the rules."

"Kenbury seems a very funny sort of school," I remarked, a little suspiciously.

"Funny!" retorted Bob. "That's all you know about it! There's nothing very *funny* about a hole like that. But, of course, a kid like you can't be expected to understand."

"I shall be thirteen in March!" I cried indignantly.

"You're only twelve, *now*," Bob reminded me.

Bob went back to school some weeks before we left London; indeed, we were not really settled at Kenbury till towards the end of the summer term. And the first Saturday after we had moved into our new house, Bob came home to lunch, bringing Hilton minor with him. He naturally wanted to save as many people from starvation as possible; and I only wondered that he did not bring the whole school with him.

Photo. R. W. Thomas

THE SENIORS OF CHELTENHAM COLLEGE PATRONISE A TUCK BARROW IN LIEU OF A SHOP.

Before the barrow has been ten minutes within the College precincts, it is rifled of its dainties by hungry Collegians.

THE WESTMINSTER SCHOOL BOYS FAVOUR A QUAINT OLD SHOP IN GREAT COLLEGE STREET,
Where they spend a goodly portion of their pocket money on "Tuck."

They ate such an enormous lunch that even daddy, who never notices anything, could not help being struck by it.

"School seems to agree with you youngsters," he chuckled, when Bob's plate came up for a third time.

Bob only grinned, but I really thought it was time that daddy heard the truth. It is all very well to be absent-minded if you are only a Dean, but when you are a father as well, you really ought to have your eyes opened sometimes. So I prepared to open daddy's eyes.

"It isn't because school agrees with them," I cried eagerly, "its because they never get anything to eat there, poor boys!"

To my astonishment, everybody laughed at this, except Bob and Hilton minor. You couldn't expect *them* to laugh, of course; and I was not surprised that Bob glared at me across the table, for I knew how brave he was, and how he would endure anything sooner than betray his sufferings to father. Still, I thought that Hilton minor was really carrying endurance a bit too far, when he said that there was always plenty of grub at school, only it was too beastly plain for words. It was the first time, since his arrival in the house, that he had said anything but "Yes, please," so nobody would have noticed if he had kept quiet that time. As for daddy, he went on chuckling for ever so long.

"Poor boys!" he remarked. "Did I hear you say cherry pie, Hilton?"

"You *are* a silly goat, Meg!" muttered Bob.

After lunch, we went round the garden to look for fruit. It was a pity that daddy did not come too, for I am sure he would have been convinced that the boys were starving if he could have seen the havoc they made among the peaches in the hothouse. I was rather glad they were so hungry, for the conversation of Hilton minor was distinctly limited, and I think we should have been rather dull if there hadn't been any peaches to pick.

"Do you like school?" I asked him, rather foolishly.

"Beastly hole," sputtered Hilton minor through a mouthful of peach.

"Do you like cricket?" was my next question.

"Oh, it's all right," said Hilton minor, starting on his third nectarine.

I made one more effort, "Don't you really get enough to eat?" I asked pityingly.

"Oh, I don't know!" was the unsatisfactory reply.

"What an awful shame!" I exclaimed.

"Oh, it's all right," said Hilton minor again.

Nobody could say that Hilton minor was an inspiriting sort of boy, and it was really rather a relief when eight o'clock came and Bob took him away. Mummy said he was shy; and daddy chuckled, as usual. I said nothing, but I remembered all the stories I had read about starving people who became torpid after their first meal, and I thought I understood the dullness of Hilton minor.

A few days later, mummy wanted Nurse to call at Barnard's about some brown bread that had not been sent; so we all started out after lunch, Nurse and the twins, and the baby and me — and we went straight down to the town in a sort of procession. It was evidently a half-holiday, for the Kenbury boys were all over the place, most of them in flannels; and the twins were immensely interested.

"Lots of uvver boys, but no Bobby!" sighed Dolly.

"Where's Bobby, Meg?" inquired Jack, who always thinks I know everything.

"Are *you* Bobby?" cried Dolly, staring up at a boy about Bob's size and making him look most uncomfortable.

"Come along," I said hurriedly, and we went on till we came to Barnard's.

I thought we should be safe at Barnard's; for judging by Bob's accounts of the "beastly hole," as he called his school, I naturally did not expect to find any of the Kenbury boys inside a confectioner's shop. For all that, Barnard's shop was so full of Kenbury boys that we could not get in at the door.

I must say I felt puzzled. After all, you need not starve as long as you can go to a confectioner's shop. But Bob had never even mentioned Barnard's. Nothing, I had been led to believe, stood between Bob and starvation. Yet here was a shop stocked with "grub" of the kind that Bob loved; and it was

Photo. R. W. Thomas.

THE BOYS OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL GENERALLY HAVE AN EXTRA "TUCK-IN" AFTER DINNER, AND ENJOY IT, AS CAN BE SEEN IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH.

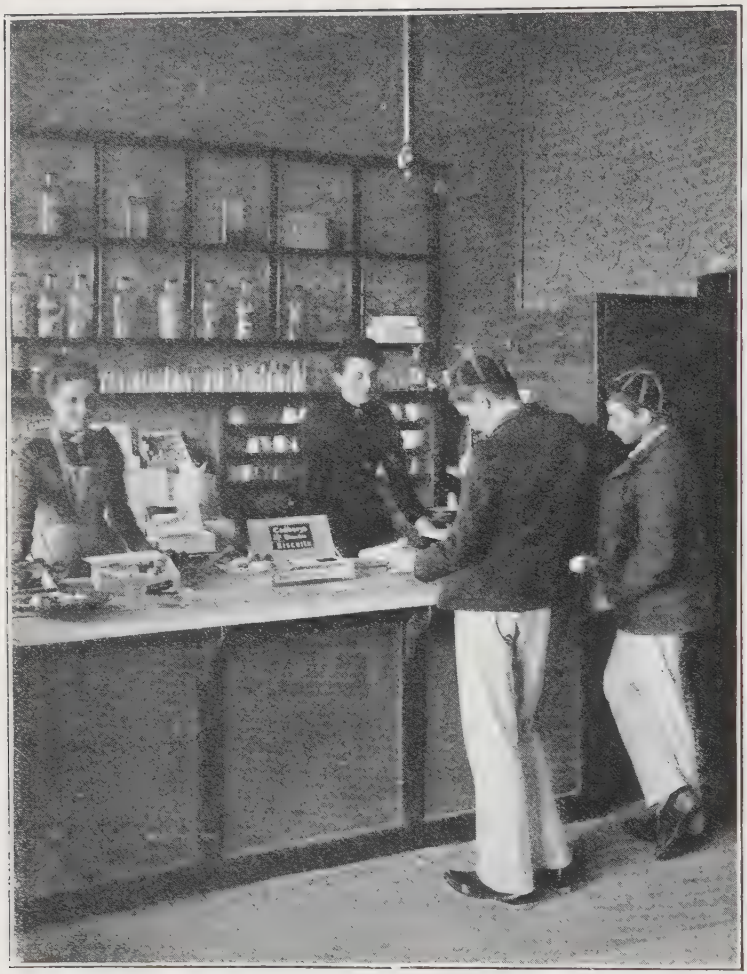


Photo. R. W. Thomas

"PASTRIES OR SWEETS?"—A DIFFICULT CHOICE.

While their seniors prefer a barrow, the juniors of Cheltenham College revel in the delights of the tuck shop proper.

packed with Bob's schoolfellows. I was still puzzling over it, when Nurse forced an entry into the shop. It would take more than a handful of schoolboys to stand against Nurse and the perambulator, and she soon made a pathway through them for the twins and me. Of course, all the boys giggled a good deal, and I wished she wouldn't do it, and hoped like anything that Hilton minor was not in the shop. I really couldn't stand being laughed at by a boy like Hilton minor. It was when I was looking nervously round for Hilton minor that I caught sight of Bob.

There he was, at the back of the shop, with a glass of fizzy ginger beer in one hand, and a jam puff in the other; and he was stuffing away as busily as if he had not had a meal for a month. Yet it was only just two o'clock; and even at the "beastly hole," there must have been some sort of dinner at one. My faith in Bob's starvation was suddenly shaken; and I remembered how daddy had chuckled when I tried to open his eyes. Then Bob looked round and saw me.

Of course, he pretended he didn't know me, though Hilton minor, who was just behind him, pulled off his cap quite politely. But then, I wasn't Hilton minor's sister, which made all the difference. I was so hurt at having been deceived by Bob that I was not a bit sorry for him now, though he did look awfully miserable at the sight of Nurse and the perambulator and the twins. He tried to get behind Hilton minor; but it was no good.

"There's Bobby! Bruvver Bobby!" shrilled Jack in the most excited manner, while Dolly jumped about on people's toes and clapped her hands and made no end of babyish fuss. Even baby woke up from her sleep, and crowed with delight; so it was no wonder that Bob looked more wretched than ever, and tried to cover his confusion by treating Hilton minor, and everybody who was within reach, to jam puffs. But luck was against Bob, to-day; for just then, Nurse finished talking about brown bread, and caught sight of him.

"Oh, Master Bob!" she exclaimed re-

SEDBERGH'S TUCK SHOP.

proachfully. "Don't eat them indigestible things, my dear. They upset you, last holidays, something dreadful!"

Bob and I had it out the next time we met.

"Look here," he began, in his old authoritative manner; "I won't have you kids in our tuck shop on half-holidays!"

"You should have told me that you had a tuck shop," I answered airily.

"If you weren't a *girl*," he replied, "you'd know that every school had a tuck shop."

"Is it because I'm a girl that you pretended you were starved when you weren't?" I retorted.

"I am starved," he persisted still rather feebly. "Tuck doesn't count!"

Bob saw he was getting the worst of it, and gave in. "I say," he began, in quite a different sort of tone, "if I tell you what Hilton minor said about you, will you promise to keep Nurse out of the town on half-holidays?"

THE JOYS OF "CROWN": THE TUCK SHOP OF CHARTERHOUSE.

So called from the sign of a crown that hangs from the cavilion.

Photo. by H. Knightbridge.

THE OLD-FASHIONED TUCK SHOP PATRONISED BY CHIGWELL GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOYS.

Two small men with limited means can be seen wistfully eyeing the "grub" which will be devoured later in the day by the boys of the Grammar School.

"Hilton minor never says anything; you know he doesn't," was my scornful reply.

"He did say something, this time," said Bob.

I began to waver. "I don't believe he did," I answered.

"Promise?" Bob said.

I tried to go on being scornful, but it was not a bit of good. I caught his eye, and we both laughed. I never can quarrel with Bob for long. Besides, I wanted to know what Hilton minor had said; though, of course, it did not matter to *me* what a boy like that thought about me.

"All right," I said.

"It wasn't anything," answered Bob, indifferently. "He only said you were too awfully decent to be a silly girl!"

A PAGE OF THE PAST.

Opened at Christmas time.

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

Illustrated by G. H. EVISON.

WAS the youngest and Margaret the eldest of a very large family. Margaret married very young, and I was a little tot of a bridesmaid barely six years old. There were six Miss Trevors, of Hillside, and the three boys made our number up to nine. When Margaret came to have children, they were much more contemporary with me than I was with Margaret. Somehow to me she always seemed a grown-up young lady, and it was not until I had turned thirty years old that I ever felt that she was my sister. Up to that time she had always seemed more like an aunt, partly because her brood were, as I have said, nearer to my age, and she, of course, being their mother, appeared to stand in the same kind of relation to me as she did to them.

Well, I was something over thirty years old, and it was Christmas time. It happened that of all my brothers and sisters—and every one of them was married but me—Margaret's was the only house to which I felt able and willing to go for the festive season. Lottie was away in India, a couple of her girls were spending their Christmas at Downham Manor with Margaret; Laura was wintering in Egypt in order to be near Jessica, whose husband was quartered there. Laura, I must tell you, had no children, and had a very delicate, hypochondriac husband, always searching about for sunshine and the health which he never found. Jessica was married to a very smart fellow in a line regiment. They had several little children, and were as happy as the day was long. My fifth sister, Gwendoline—or "Gwen," as we had always called her—had some five years before married a man in the diplomatic service, and was then in Russia. The boys were all away, too; one a sailor, and fixed for several years on a Chinese station, one a soldier out in India, while Dick, the eldest, and now the master of Hillside, had let his house for the winter and gone South for no particular reason at all.

For my part, since I had been left alone in the world, I had set up my tent in the tiniest of tiny flats in a quite cheap part of London—not, indeed, a hundred miles from that corner, hemmed in by railways, where they annually hold an exhibition. My flat was very small. I had no servant excepting my old nurse, who mothered me and did for me as if I were still a baby in the nursery. It must have been a terrible change for the old woman to leave the wide-spreading downs, the great rambling house, and the fresh air of Hillside for the narrow confines of a small London flat. It is true that Nanny might have gone to any household in the family—that had children, that is to say—and been welcome; but Nanny was stout; Nanny said she could not be "fashed" with more babies, and that Miss Lucy wanted her; that Miss Lucy, being alone in the world, had more need of somebody to mother her and look after her than any of her brothers and sisters. And so Nanny had become the queen-regnant of the little flat which called me mistress.

I did not go down to my sister's house until the day before Christmas Eve. Nanny, of course, went with me. Not one of her grown-up chicks would have slept in their beds had they known that Nanny was left by herself to pass the festive season. We Trevors had always made a

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tremendous fuss of Christmas. We had kept the festival with all the old traditions; and, be the season green or white, we always made as much of it as possible. So when I went to Downham Manor, Nanny went also, that she might pass a pleasant and happy Christmas in the sacred and quiet dignity of the housekeeper's room. I took all my presents with me from London. I need hardly say that choosing for such a large party necessitated a good deal of care and forethought on my part that nobody should be left out. There were not only Margaret, her husband, and six children, but there were Lottie's two girls spending their holidays there, a young nephew of George Mainwaring's, to say nothing of several old servants from Hillside who had taken on service with Margaret.

"Now, Nanny," I said the evening before we left home, "do you think I have left anybody out?"

"Well, Miss Lucy," Nanny replied, "I really don't think you have. But what about your list? If you go right down the list, then I think you will feel yourself pretty safe. There's Miss Margaret—I should say Mrs. Mainwaring—and there's the master, and there's Miss Ethel."

"But you forget, Nanny, there's Miss Ethel's little girl. I have forgotten her. I must take something for Ethel's little girl, mustn't I?"

"Well, Miss Lucy, that's not a difficult matter. She's but a little tot. You can go up to High Street to-morrow while I am finishing off the packing, and buy her something at one of the toy bazaars."

"Yes, I might do that."

I went carefully down the list. No, I hadn't forgotten anybody; and one present, of which I had said nothing, was that for Nanny herself.

In due course of time Nanny and I arrived at the station for Downham, and were there met by three excited girls with the omnibus which was to convey us and our belongings to the Manor.

"Dear me, children," I remarked, "you seem to be extra full of glee to-day. Is something unusual on foot?"

"Well, Lucy," cried Winifred—Margaret's children had always resolutely declined to give me the honourable prefix of "aunt" or "auntie"—"Well, Lucy, we've got rather great doings on. Father has asked several people down, without even consulting mother, and as mother had really filled the house on her own account, it's going to be a tight fit. I don't know that you are not going to be asked to tuck in with one of us."

"Why can't you tuck in together?" I demanded.

"We are; we're all tucked in together excepting Winifred," said two voices.

"I don't mind sleeping with Winifred."

"The fact is mother has put you a room, because, as she said, she wasn't going to slight her own family, and if anybody had to turn out, it would have to be one of father's men guests, whom he had asked without consulting her. Father was quite woebegone when he saw how much he had put mother about; but none of his people come till to-morrow."

"Oh, we'll see your mother about it ourselves," I remarked, easily. "It's all the same to me where I sleep. Anybody who goes about as I do, and pays twenty visits in the course of a year, can comfortably sleep in any bed; one is as good as another. We'll tell her as soon as we get in. Well, what else is going on?"

"Oh, my dear," cried Winifred, "you have no conception of the great doings we are going to have! Father has suddenly made up his mind – you know the sudden way father does make up his mind—that we would have a real old-fashioned country Christmas. Mother declared that he went up to London on purpose to see if he couldn't make some arrangement for turning on snow and ice; but, anyway, father got hopelessly taken in on that score, and he came back radiant on some points, tempered by a lugubrious remark that a 'green Christmas makes a full kirkyard.' So far, everybody is in excellent health and spirits."

"But what are you going to do?"

They explained at length the many schemes for amusement and for keeping up the season with honoured and timely observances.

"I assure you that the house looks like a gigantic Jack-in-the-box," Helen explained. "The hall is a mass of greenery and paper roses, and Chinese lanterns, and devices, and mottoes, and all the rest of it, and really you

will hardly know it when you go into it. And er has given quite a quantity of money to put into the Christmas pudding, and something to go into the pies, and there's going to be a Christmas-tree, and a lucky-bag, and a fish-pond, and a bran tub, and all sorts of things, both upstairs and down—I mean to say, both for the hall and the servants' hall. And the day after Christmas day he's going to give an enormous treat to the labourers and their wives and children, with a Christmas-tree and goodness knows what for them. And we are going to have all the old songs and dances and games—and, really, we shan't know ourselves!"

This was poured out by Helen, and as soon as she paused for breath, Winifred broke in.

"And on New Year's Eve all the tenantry are to have a dinner and dance; and we are having a hop in the middle of the week, and there's going to be a juvenile party on the next night, and a servants' ball on the third of January. I tell you, Lucy, we're going to have gay doings, and no mistake about it."

"But why, why this sudden craze for Christmas?" I demanded.

"Ah, you must ask father about that. Mother thinks it's a bore and a nuisance and an expense for nothing; but poor mother, every objection that she makes is instantly overruled! Father is Christmas, and all Christmas and nothing but Christmas; and, of course, none of us see why we shouldn't take all the fun out of his whim that we can."

We reached the Manor very shortly after this, and my sister Margaret came bustling out to the top of the steps to meet us.

"My dear Lucy," she said, "I am so pleased to see you! Oh, my dear, you have come upon a whirlwind, a family whirlwind, a social whirlwind, a Christmas whirlwind—a perfect maelstrom of confusion. George, dear old fellow, has suddenly taken it into his head to keep Christmas in the old feudal way. He is spending mints of money, and has asked shoals of people down, and——"

"Oh, it's all right," I put in. "I'm going to sleep with Winifred."

"Oh, well, that will be one bedroom to the good. You are sure you don't mind?"

"Not a bit."

"I shouldn't be surprised if the girls didn't have to tuck in still a little closer. One can't put people out, even bachelors."

"No, I suppose not."

I linked my arm through hers, and we walked into the great hall, which, as Helen had truly said, was transmogrified out of all its original beauty and resembled a gigantic—well, the child had said Jack-in-the-box, and she was not very far wrong.

"Tell me, Margaret," I said, "what other people have you staying in the house, and who is coming?"

My sister ran off a list of names which I had never heard of before, but she wound up with one which fell upon my ear with startling distinctness.

"All very nice people," she said. "And then, at the last minute, George ran against Colonel Brunton, and he's coming to-morrow."

II.

It was nearly an hour before I found myself able to go upstairs and begin dressing for dinner—I mean before I was able to leave the library where the house party were all assembled. When I reached the bed-room which I was to share with my niece Winifred, I found that my old Nanny had carefully arranged my clothes to the best possible advantage in the limited space set apart for my accommodation.

"Shall I stay and help you to dress, Miss Lucy?" she demanded.

"No, Nanny, certainly not, and I didn't even want you to do this much. Do go downstairs and have a good time," I declared.

I had the room to myself for a little while, and I sat down by the fire to think over the bit of information which my sister had given me.

So Colonel Brunton was coming back into my life once more. He didn't know it, but it was for Colonel Brunton that I had remained Lucy Trevor until I was over thirty years of age—well, to tell the truth, I was three years beyond it; yes, thirty-three years old. I had had many offers; but the image of a man who had never given me more than a passing glance had always remained with me. Did I say that he had never given me more than a passing glance? Well, I had not always thought so.

"WE WERE MET AT THE STATION BY THREE EXCITED GIRLS."—(*p.* 171.)

I met him first—how many years ago?—when I was not yet entered upon my twenties. I remembered that first meeting so well, as I sat by the fire in Winifred's bedroom that evening. It was at a dance. I was sitting beside my chaperon of the evening, feeling a little out of it, feeling a little as if I wished that I were back in London, where I knew people when I went to a dance or a party, wondering if my hostess was going to leave me there all the evening watching other girls, not as good-looking, and not as well dressed, and not as young as myself, capering about while I sat a forlorn wallflower. And then, just as my despair was at its height, a resplendent vision in uniform approached us, and greeting my hostess in a tone of intimacy, muttered something under his moustache to her which made her turn and introduce him to me.

My life was never the same after that moment. He was the handsomest and most popular man in his regiment. He was the handsomest man and the best dancer in that great crowded ballroom, and he belonged to me—or I thought so. I saw a great deal of him during that visit, and I saw him a few times afterwards in London; that is to say, he came to call upon my mother. And then all at once something happened, I never knew what, but he came no more.

How well, as I sat by the fire, I could recall the last visit he ever paid to our house in Warwick Square. I remember his coming into the firelit drawing-room where I was sitting in a sort of day-dream by the fire, too absorbed in my thoughts to turn on the lights. He came in in that curious, swift, resolute way of his.

"You are alone," he said. "I may as well say what I have got to say quickly and get it over. I have come to bid you good-bye."

"But why?" I faltered.

"Some day," he said, taking no direct notice of my question, "it may be in my power to explain. Until then try to forget me, and I hope, Lucy, that it won't be as hard for you to do it as it is for me to ask it."

I don't think I said anything. In less than three minutes he was gone. There was nothing but the pressure of his hands upon mine to shew that he thought more of me than of any other woman. And I was just twenty years old. Well, thirteen years had gone by—thirteen years in which the environments of my life had been entirely changed. I was the only one of the six handsome Miss Trevors who was Miss Trevor still, and I was going to meet Colonel Brunton again.

"Between ourselves," said Margaret to me late that night, "Colonel Brunt admires Helen very much. Of course, now he has come into so much money—he is a match. Yes . . . a little older. He is just forty. He told me so the last time I saw him. Well, dear Helen is three-and-twenty. Not such a child."

"It is seventeen years difference, Margaret," I remarked.

"Yes, I think it is too much . . . yes. I don't like a difference myself, but where there is plenty of money, and a man can make proper settlements, it does make a difference. And if Helen fancies him——"

"Does Helen fancy him?"

"Well, dear, I have never heard her say so, and I have only my own ideas to go upon, for he has never said a word, but I have seen him watch Helen about the room. He always seems to have a special word for her, and George said that he did fish so unmistakably for an invitation that he felt, even if we had to put up a bed in his study, he must ask him down."

"How long have you known him?" I asked.

"Colonel Brunton? Oh, off and on for a long time. I fancy I met him at mother's. You used to know him, didn't you?"

"Yes, but it is a long time ago."

"I don't think I saw him for years and years until we met him last September at Aix."

"Oh, you met him at Aix?"

"Yes. And then he seemed to take to Helen very much. Of course, I don't know, it's only my idea—I have never said a word to anybody—but George said he fished unmistakably to be asked; said he was lonely and hated his own place, meant to spend Christmas in London, spoke of himself as a poor fellow leading a bachelor life, and so George asked him, you know."

I was so thoroughly unnerved by the knowledge that Colonel Brunton was going to stay under the same roof as myself that I did not like to mention him to any of my nieces; more particularly did I keep away from any subject

which would lead up to a mention of him when Helen was near during that evening and the following morning. If I had had any reasonable excuse I would have betaken myself away before his arrival through sheer cowardice that I should have to witness the bringing about of his probable engagement to my niece; but I had no excuse. If I had been staying in any house but that of a sister I could have cut myself distinctly away, but I knew no subterfuge would hold good with Margaret. I could not pretend that I was ill; I could not lay claim to toothache; I had never had neuralgia in my life. No, there was no help for it. I must stay at Downham Manor and bear the ugly experience that lay before me with what equanimity and self-command I could.

Colonel Brunton came down from town by the same train as I had done the previous day. I looked up with a throb at my heart as he came into the library, where we were all gathered together at afternoon tea. Oh, how little altered he was at forty! He had the same active, lithe, spare figure that he had had at twenty-seven. He came in with the same direct swiftness of step. He greeted my sister as he had greeted me many a time in those days so long gone by, then turned to her married daughter, Ethel, who happened to be sitting next to her.

"You remember my sister Lucy," said Margaret, indicating my whereabouts by a gesture.

He turned quickly and came across the room to me.

"I never forget my old friends," he said.

He took my hand in his and then he turned away and began talking to Helen. I tried once or twice to get up and go, but my limbs trembled under me, and I sat still because I was so afraid that I might give myself away and let everybody into my secret.

He was in no hurry to go to his room. Margaret asked him several times, and he said: "No, thank you. Ten minutes is quite enough for me, and my fellow has put everything at the top, so that I can get out my things in two minutes."

So there he sat, and there I sat, and at last

"I SAW THAT I WAS NOT THE FIRST COMER."—(*p.* 176.)

Margaret said that she must go and dress, and that Teddy must show him his room now. I saw them all go, and then I managed to get up and go unsteadily across the room and up the stairs.

"Lucy, you are not well," said Winifred, when I got into our bedroom, where she was already half dressed for dinner.

I sat down by the fire. "I don't feel very well, Winifred," I replied. "I think I took cold coming down yesterday. It seems to me bitter."

"My dear, it has been snowing hard for the last hour," she said. "Everything is white."

She pulled aside the curtain and looked out into the night—a horrid wild night.

"Father did make his arrangements with the Clerk of the Weather, you see, after all. For my part, Lucy," she went on, "I don't think I like all this Christmas. It's a horrid season, cold and dreary and desolate. It's all very well for us; we are well-off. We have plenty of fires and we are all together; but I can't help thinking of the people outside."

She was so touched by the picture she had drawn of what Christmas might be, that she never noticed me any more. I did not attempt to dress. I washed my hands and smoothed my hair, and I slipped into the smartest tea-gown that I had—I believed that I should be warmer—and then, just to get out of the reach of Winifred's chattering tongue, I went downstairs as soon as I was ready. Truth to tell, I wanted to talk as little as need be. I felt if I were safely ensconced in the big wing chair by the drawing-room fireside, that I should be less under observation than if I entered when a dozen people were assembled. But when I had shut the door behind me, and came round the screen which shielded it, I saw that I was not the first-comer. In the wing chair which I had marked down for my haven of refuge, Colonel Brunton was sitting. He jumped up when he saw me, and came across the room to meet me.

"I was afraid to ask a question," he said, looking straight down into my eyes. "I never dared to ask your people where you were." He paused, and took my left hand in his. "No wedding-ring," he said. "Thank heaven! Lucy, did you wait for me? You understood why I left you before. I was poor—I had no right—oh, my darling! My darling!"

RESULT OF THE MIXED PUZZLE COMPETITION FOR SEPTEMBER.

The first prize, value One Guinea, falls to ELYS PERRAN (20) of Westbourne, Barnes Close, Winchester (123 marks); the second prize, value 10s. 6d., to KATHLEEN CODE, Tregwynt, Redhill (121 marks). Three competitors tie for the third prize, value 5s., with 120 marks. These are MARION MCLAREN (17), Furmlee, Murtle, Aberdeenshire; MARJORIE F. BACON (16), East Tisted Rectory, Alton, Hants; and E. ISMAY TRIMBLE (18), 21, Shakespeare Road, Bedford, each of whom will receive a prize value 2s. 6d. WINIFRED GRACE HUDSON and MARY WINIFRED BELL come next, and are honourably mentioned and will be awarded a Diploma.

The correct answers to the puzzles were:—

RIDDLE	Tar Tar	Tartar.
CHARADE	Chess a"peak	Chesapeake.

RHYME WORDS.

"Oh," said Kate, as she stood at the gate,
"How sad a fate to watch and wait
So late, so late a tardy mate."
Then she took a plate and seized a crate
Of strawberries ate a pound in weight
Of the tempting bait at a rapid rate.
"Oh! how I hate" (her wrath was great)
"A wooden pate; I'd keep a slate
And on it state the time and date
To meet my mate ere I'd make her wait
So late so late at her cottage gate"
Said Kate, irate!

A CROSS OF DIAMONDS.

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          P
        T I E
      P I A N O
        E N D
    C       O       T
  O A T     R     B A T
C A M E O R E A T A B O O
  T E A     A     T O N
    O       T       O
        B O A
      T O U G H
        A G E
          H
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PRIZE BOUT RIMÉ.

An iron coast, an angry *sea*,
Dark cliffs that frown against the *sky*;
"Love recks nor cares, for Love is *free*!"
Fast, fast before the storm they *fly*.
Two hands to hold the tattered *sail*,
Gold lining to the threat'ning *cloud*;
A voice of music in the *gale*,
A wedding wreath the grey mist's *shroud*;
A lullaby—the restless *wave*;—
O tempest, peace! Love knows no *grave*.

ELYS PERRAN (Age 20).

Photo. Gunn & Stuart.

THE GIRLS WHO RODE AS "LANCERS" IN THE MUSICAL RIDE GIVEN AT SHEEN HOUSE CLUB IN AID OF THE WAR FUNDS.

Some Beautiful Entertainments given by Girls.

By GEORGE A. WADE.

SOME of the most charming festivities and entertainments that have lately delighted society have been either got up by girls, or girls have taken the principal parts therein. Many of these festivities have had merely a local renown, the fame of others has spread far and wide, but the grace of detail in which so much of their charm lay has not been described, while others have never been heard of at all. I cannot within the limits of a short article touch upon even a tithe of these entertainments, but I should like to give an account of one or two of recent date, which I am sure will interest the girl-readers of this magazine.

At a fête given recently at Sheen House, near Richmond, one of the most attractive features of a brilliant programme was the performance of a company of girls dressed up as Lancers. These girl-soldiers went through a musical ride with a grace and spirit that called forth the applause of the Royal visitors and of all others present. It must have been an exceptionally fine display to have been ranked as the best at a festival got up under the auspices of such experienced women as the Marchioness of Lansdowne, the Countess of Chesterfield, the Countess of Dundonald, Lady Randolph Churchill and others equally capable of judging.

Many girls would have been contented to have gone through the ride more or less satisfactorily to themselves and their friends, without troubling too much about the accuracy of their uniforms and of the military evolutions they went through. But when such critical judges as Lady White, Mrs. Baden-Powell, and Lady Dundonald were there watching them, the girls were put on their mettle, and the dress and exercises were as exact in every detail and as swiftly and precisely executed as if the display had been achieved by soldiers at a military tournament. The "Lancers' Ride" was undoubtedly *the* piece of the day.

Few amongst our summer festivals are more charming or delightful in simplicity and grace than that of "Rose Queen Day" at Lytham in Lancashire. The interest of this outdoor festival, that takes place in July, draws thousands of visitors to this quiet Northern watering-place. One of the prettiest maidens of the town is chosen

to represent the Queen of the Roses. She is dressed in white with a cloak and train, and her head-dress is one mass of the blossoms of which she is the Sovereign. A fine bunch of roses is placed in her bodice, and she carries a larger bunch in her hand. Pages carry her train; she is followed by her knights, and by eight maids-of-honour.

The maids and pages carry roses, and their head-gear is adorned with garlands of them, red, yellow, white, and crimson. Those only who have seen the procession can know how lovely all this show of roses is; and how fair are the "Queens of Roses" Lancashire can produce, that year after year grace the old town of Lytham. From the neighbouring towns, such as Blackpool, come visitors in thousands on the appointed day to swell the ranks in the already crowded streets, and to gaze upon the Rose Queen and her procession; and as it passes they express their pleasure as only Northern folk can.

Photo. Speaight.

A GROUP OF BEAUTIFUL FLOWER GIRLS WHO TOOK PART IN THE COUNTESS OF ANCASTER'S FÊTE AT THE BOTANICAL GARDENS.

The Lady Eileen Wellesley, the Misses Daisy and Esther Combe, Miss Victoria Campbell, and Miss Helen Maisey Thompson.

To flowers are assigned a very prominent part in most entertainments where girls take their share. A delightful ball was given in Paris last winter, when the idea was suggested to all the girls attending it that each should appear representing some flower. A truly beautiful array of girls, clad as blossoms, gathered at the ball. Scarcely any well-known flower but had its representative, and many little-known ones were there too, both of the garden and the field. It would take too long to tell of all the varied and ingenious devices by which girls of several nationalities strove to display the charms of the flowers they portrayed. A very artistic costume set forth the claims of the cornflower's blue to perfection. The dress suggested waving cornfields as the rustling bunches of corn and cornflowers which adorned it swayed as its wearer moved.

The fuchsia costume attracted great attention. Splendid sprays of the graceful blossom fell in profusion over the dress. It did not need the exquisite perfume of heliotrope on the heavily-laden air of the room to tell that some girl had chosen that flower as hers, and soon the fair one was detected robed in a heliotrope gown, over which the delicate blossoms were scattered thickly. Altogether the ball was a wonderful success, and as the members of the sterner sex had been called upon to lay aside black coats and to blossom out in red, pink, yellow, and pale blue ones, the ladies' charming floral gowns showed up against a brilliant and variegated background.

A very pretty outdoor festival wherein girls play a prominent part is the "Rush-bearing Service," celebrated each year in August at Ambleside and Grasmere. The ceremonies observed in these two neighbouring villages of the Lake District are quite distinct, although in various details they are substantially the same. The Ambleside festival is kept on St. Oswald's Day, or as near that day as possible. A young girl is chosen Queen of the

THE BLESSING OF THE SEA: A PROCESSION OF GIRLS WHICH TAKES PLACE YEARLY AT OSTEND.

Ceremonies. She is usually attired in white, though the optional colour, green, is occasionally preferred by a Westmoreland maiden. To attend upon the Queen, several maids are chosen, and these may wear any colour they wish. At an appointed hour the girls go down to the lake of Windermere or Grasmere, and gather as many of the finest rushes and flowers as they can find on the banks.

Many of these flowers are woven into garlands,

Photo. Walmsley Bros., Ambleside.

THE QUAINT OLD CEREMONY OF RUSHBEARING IS OBSERVED IN GRASMERE, IN WHICH GIRLS PLAY A PROMINENT PART.

A girl is chosen Queen of the Ceremonies and together with her maids goes to the lake to gather rushes with which they adorn the church.

Photo. W. Scott, Ilkley

"LIVING WHIST"—PLAYED BY GIRLS AT ILKLEY IN AID OF A LOCAL CHARITY.

and the longest rushes are either placed in a sheet specially devoted to the purpose, or are carried in the children's hands. Then a procession is formed, preceded by bands of music, and the young folk set off for the village church. The sacred edifice has been decked previously with wreaths and garlands fastened to the pews and windows. All kinds of devices are represented in the decorations, such as harps, crowns, shields, etc. As the Rush-Queen walks up the aisle, her maidens strew the floor with rushes taken from the sheet. Special seats have been reserved for them. This is a necessary precaution, for they would often find no room, so great is the number of people—villagers and visitors—who are assembled there to see the ceremony. Appropriate hymns and service follow the incoming of the maidens, after which the "rush-bearing" of the Westmoreland village comes to an end for another year.

A delightful entertainment, whose chief attraction was the performances of the young ladies taking part in it, was given lately in the grounds of Borough Road College, Isleworth. This college is really one for young men who intend to become schoolmasters in primary schools, but on the Saturday in question it was given over to merry-makers. Our task would be too long to recount here the diverse pageants that took place in the grounds during this memorable fête in support of most deserving objects, but we must speak of what was universally allowed to be the finest of all the side-shows, namely, the driving of young lady-bicyclists in teams of four by a gentleman-rider.

All the bicycles were decorated as beautifully as any I have ever seen in a cycle carnival. Flowers, lanterns, and ribbons of every colour were surely never more effectively displayed than they were at Borough Road College by the ladies on that afternoon. Imagine this mass of colour flashing past, and realise the movement, the "go" of the brilliant sport. To the spectators it brought the Riviera carnivals much nearer London.

The celebrated fête organised by the Countess of Ancaster in the grounds of the Royal Botanical Society in aid of the funds of the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, may, perhaps, claim to have been on the whole the prettiest of all girls' entertainments during the past year. The fête was held under Royal patronage.

In what was called the "Flower Dance" the

daughters of Lady Newton Butler, Lady Meysey-Thompson, Lady Barnard, Lady De Trafford, and others took part. They were dressed in various shades of pink and green, and moved to music with the grace and the *verve* of Eastern dancers. They, and their boy-partners, carried wands tipped with flowers and festooned with coloured ribbons. One of the most admired dances was a gavotte arranged by Lady Helen Stewart, in which the girls wore "Cherry-Ripe" dresses of white muslin and mob-caps, and sashes of pretty ribbon. The little daughters of Lady Aline Beaumont, Lady Doreen Long, Lady Wenlock, and Lady Eden were among the dancers. Later on an Irish jig was performed by four girls wearing green skirts, white bodices and aprons, red cloaks, and red and white handkerchiefs about their necks. The enthusiasm this dance evoked was tremendous.

Some hundreds of pounds found their way into the coffers of the excellent Society. Fashionable London had crowded into the Botanical Gardens to see the 'coming race' of fashionable dancers and beauties, and from the remarks that were heard afterwards on every hand, fashionable London was supremely pleased.

Many of the annual May-day festivities that used to take place throughout all rural England in days gone by, have passed into the limbo of things forgotten. But there is one spot in the land where can yet be seen the glory of May-day in all its pristine beauty; where the Queen of the May is something more than a remembrance or a poem; where the customs of our forefathers are renewed each year on May 1st. That spot is Knutsford, in Cheshire. Whatever other May-day ceremonies you may have witnessed, preserving one relic of the old rite here and another there, they must all pale before the glories of the annual festival at Knutsford. It is the boast of Cheshire, not of its small country-town alone, this beautiful fête. In other villages of our land you see children who pretend to dance and revel on this special day, but there is no other town that trains its girls systematically, so to speak, for the occasion as Knutsford does. You are reminded irresistibly of the lines of the late Poet Laureate when you find how long and carefully the Knutsford girl looks forward to the coming triumph when she shall be Queen o' the May.

There is great competition for the sovereignty, for Cheshire can boast lovely girls and famous born-dancers amongst its rural population, and Knutsford has a wide choice of both. On the appointed day the chosen sovereign leads the revels with her maids, and presides over the processions and festivities much as does any other May Queen. The Cheshire town makes a wonderful show of bunting, decoration, and music at its fête.

We have, as was said, a Rose Queen in England, but we have never had such a scene of roses as Vienna had during the past summer. The Park Club, which is Vienna's most aristocratic club, determined to give such a show and feast in honour of the ladies as would be unique. So it was settled that roses should be the sole decoration used. Imagine, therefore, whole suites of rooms with their walls absolutely hidden by roses of all colours and shades. The glasses covering the electric light were rose-coloured! Festoons of roses hung across each room and along all the stairs, whilst the balustrades resembled hanging gardens of roses. Rose-coloured lanterns lit up

Photo. Speaight.

A DAINTY SPANISH DANCER (MISS HERSEY MALTBY.)

Who danced for the sweet cause of charity at the Countess of Ancaster's fête in the Botanical Gardens.

the large gardens, and the orchestra—all girls and older ladies,—sat concealed in a rose-covered bower! Their hair and their dresses were adorned with the flower of the evening, some white, some red, some yellow, according to the wearer's taste and complexion. As the cotillons were danced, showers of roses were shed from above upon the couples by means of a special invention of a member of the club. It was calculated that at least thirty-five thousand roses were used on this occasion at the wonderful Vienna fête!

And not the least beautiful and enjoyable amongst all beautiful entertainments in Britain are the river-fêtes on the Thames, held at many places during the charming summer days. The most delightful of these, last year, was probably that organised in aid of the *Daily Telegraph* fund for soldiers' widows and orphans, which took place at Molesey. Girls here took part in amateur theatricals; girls sang and played on green lawns; girls "passed round the hat," and who could refuse to give towards such a particularly worthy object when a pretty girl's smile was beaming on one?

When the illuminations shone forth at night along the river banks and on the boats, it was mainly the charm of the feminine element again that made the scene so bewitching. For ladies rowed, ladies sang, ladies twanged the guitar and mandoline in a fashion that no mere male could hope to rival or resist.

Lastly, let us not forget the annual procession to the sea at Ostend, the most striking feature of which is always the contingent of Belgian girls that appear in it flower-bedecked and wreathed. Great crowds of visitors from all European countries flock to see the sight, and the bevy of fair maidens never fails to win the applause which is justly their due on that day when the clergy march to "bless the sea" at Belgium's chief port.

THE MAY QUEEN OF KNUTSFORD.

The festival of the Girl-queen is observed with great ceremony at Knutsford in Cheshire and the whole town is decorated yearly in honour of her coronation.

"'WE WILL CALL THESE FOUR BON-BON BOXES THE KENNELS, AND THESE TWENTY-ONE CHOCOLATE CREAMS THE DOGS,' SAID THE PROFESSOR."

The Gentle Art of Perplexing.

How Muriel and Nance Puzzled the Professor.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY ("*The Puzzle King*").

With Illustrations by PAUL HARDY and THE AUTHOR.

YOU know Uncle William is coming to spend Christmas with us," said Muriel Mayburn to her sister.

"Yes; and do you remember that the last time he was here he was always bewildering us with those queer puzzles of his? I do wish we could turn the tables on him. It would be such fun!" replied Nancy.

"That is just what I was going to talk about. Why shouldn't we puzzle the dear old uncle this time? I am sure we could do it if we tried hard.'

"Do you really think we could, Muriel? You must remember that uncle is a learned Cambridge professor and we are only two young girls."

"That is true, Nance, but young people are not obliged to be stupid just because they are young. Old folk can't do everything better than young people."

"Yes; but I half believe these clever men spend most of their time at the university in making and answering puzzles, only they call it by the big name of 'solving problems.' You know that one puzzle

the professor gave us I afterwards found at the end of our arithmetic book, only it was there put among the 'Miscellaneous Arithmetical Propositions' and was not so amusingly worded."

"I have been thinking a lot about puzzles lately and find that many puzzles are made of little tricks and catches. You remember that conjurer that we saw, and how he tried to make us look at what he was doing with one hand so that we should miss what he did with the other, and how afterwards we heard that everything was so got up with springs and strings and false bottoms that you could never be sure of anything you saw or heard. Now, it is like that with some puzzles.

THE TWO LITTLE MAIDS PUZZLE.

The puzzle was to cut the perfectly square piece of cardboard into four pieces that would fit together and form two perfect squares with a girl in each square.

People make you look one way for the answer when you ought to be looking another. Puzzles are full of tricks and you must never take anything that is said for granted. Now, it is two months to Christmas, so we will put our heads together and see what we can do. We won't tell anybody, but just bring out our puzzles as if we made them at the time. Won't the dear old professor be startled! Can't you see his face? I can, perfectly!"

* * * * *

"Oh, Uncle, will you please give us some of your funny puzzles?" said Muriel to the professor on Christmas Eve.

"Yes, uncle dear; please do!" added Nancy.

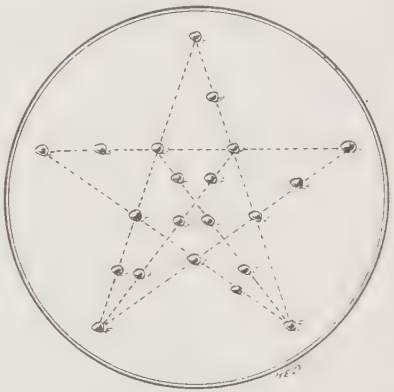
"Very well, my dear girls, I must try to think of one or two. Meanwhile, can you tell me what is most like a cat looking out of a window?"

"I am afraid we have heard that riddle before," Muriel said. "I believe the answer is, 'Another cat looking in.'"

"Yes," replied Uncle William, "that is the answer usually given, but it is not the best answer. I want you to try to find a better."

"We will think over it," put in Nancy. "But can you tell us when a closed door is not a door?"

"I should say, when it is a-jar."



THE TWENTY-ONE NUT PUZZLE.

Can you make eleven lines with five nuts in every line.

"But I said a closed door, uncle. Can a closed door be ajar?"

"Dear me! I suppose not. Then you must have another answer up your sleeves. I also will think over it. But before I forget, let me show you the puzzle of the cherry-coloured dogs with rose-coloured spots."

"Cherry-coloured dogs! Really?" cried the girls in unison. "How very funny!"

"Yes; but you must remember that some cherries are black and some roses are white, which makes it all right, doesn't it? Well, a man had twenty-one dogs for sale, and he so arranged them in four kennels that, although the buyer was told he could purchase all the animals within any of the four kennels, he was thus compelled to buy an even number of pairs and to take the odd dog. How were they arranged in the kennels? We will call these four bon-bon boxes the kennels,

I	M	P	O	R	T	E	R
T	H	R	O	W	E	R	S
D	E	M	E	N	T	E	D
S	T	E	A	M	I	N	G
P	U	D	D	I	N	G	S
M	I	N	C	E	P	I	E
M	O	C	A	S	S	I	N
E	C	A	S	E	V	E	R

CAN YOU FIND THE HIDDEN SENTENCE?

The Professor's Jumbled Letter Puzzle.

and these twenty-one chocolate creams the dogs. How is it to be done?"

"This will want a little consideration," said Muriel after they had spent some time over the puzzle. "So we will give you another and——"

"What! You are going to fight the old man on his own ground? Go on, my dear girls."

"Well, uncle," said Muriel, "if you will not think it very presumptuous of us, we should like you to set us six puzzles, and we will give you the same number of our own. Then we will compare answers on New Year's Day. Do you mind? Is it very bold?"

"THE PROFESSOR WAS SOMEWHAT PERPLEXED OVER THIS PUZZLE."

"Not at all, girls. Ha! ha! A sort of competition, eh? A battle of wit between the old and the young? Nothing will delight me better. I can see I shall have to gird up my loins for the fight. Excellent. Ha! ha!"

"Then, so far, uncle, you have asked us two, and we have asked you one. It is therefore our turn," said Nancy. "Can you turn this letter **L** into an **N** with one stroke of the pencil? No; the N must be the same height as the L and standing upright, but the stroke may be as long and winding as you like, so long as you do not lift your pencil from the paper. It is quite easy, uncle, when you know how to do it."

The professor's next puzzle was rather curious.

"Angelina," he said, "was out walking when she happened to turn round and see that her friend Susan was walking after her four hundred yards behind and trying to overtake her. So they each walked two hundred yards in a straight line with their faces towards each other. You would expect them to meet, wouldn't you? But they did not, for, strange to say, they then found that they were still four hundred yards apart. How did this happen?"

Muriel suggested that people who could do that sort of thing, ought not to be let out alone. But she made a note of the puzzle and then gave this little poser to the professor.

"We show in this little drawing how we arrange twenty-one nuts on the table so as to form seven lines with five nuts in every line. Now, how may we arrange the same number of nuts so as to form eleven lines with five nuts in every line?"

"What kind of nuts are they?" asked the professor with a sly smile.

The girls laughed but did not think it necessary to answer such an absurd question.

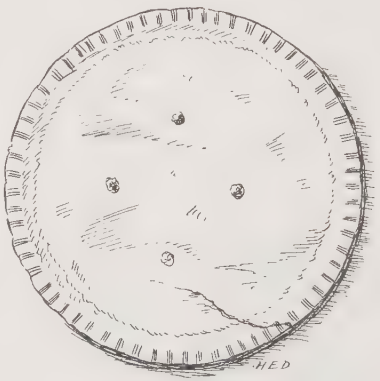
These six puzzles were all that were given on Christmas Eve, but on Christmas Day, the combatants returned to the fray, and the remaining six posers were delivered. The professor led off by saying:

"You know, girls, that if you add the five odd figures together the sum is twenty-five" (1 + 3 + 5 + 7 + 9 = 25), "and that if you add the even figures the result is twenty" (2 + 4 + 6 + 8 = 20). "Can you so place the two sets of figures that the odd ones and the even add up alike?"

The two sisters tried the little puzzle for five minutes and then decided that there would have to be another adjournment. So they at once brought out what they considered their best puzzle, and the professor was very complimentary in his remarks about it. They had prepared a drawing of two little maids on a perfectly square piece of cardboard, exactly as is shown in the illustration

They asked the professor if he could cut the cardboard into four pieces that would fit together and form two perfect squares, with a girl in each square. Of course, the two maidens must not be cut in any way, for they were portraits of little acquaintances of the Mayburns' and Nancy said she knew her uncle would not be so unkind as to cut one of her friends.

The professor was somewhat perplexed over this puzzle, and after looking at it for some time, he said it reminded him of a little letter puzzle of his own. He took a sheet of paper and drew a square divided up into a lot of little squares, in which he put different letters, as shown in our illustration. Muriel and Nancy were curious to know what these letters, and the queer jumble of words that they make, could possibly mean, until their uncle explained it all to them.



THE PUZZLE OF THE CIRCULAR SHORT CAKE.

How can this cake be divided into four equal parts by three cuts all of the same length.

"Put the point of your pencil," he said, "on the letter A that has a circle round it and strike out all the letters in sixteen straight strokes, coming back to the A again. If you do this in the correct way, all the letters at the turning points of the strokes will spell out a familiar greeting that we all give one another at this time of year. What is the sentence? Of course you must never take your pencil from the paper until you have finished your sixteen strokes, and I will tell you this to help you: one stroke never crosses another stroke and no letter is ever struck out twice."

THE HONEY MERCHANT PUZZLE.

How is he to distribute the barrels?

Then Nancy produced a picture of a man standing beside a number of barrels.

"This," she said, "is a honey merchant, and he has twenty-one barrels of honey for sale—or rather I should say he has seven barrels full, seven half-full and seven empty. He wants to sell them all to three of his customers, so that each man shall have an equal quantity of honey and the same number of barrels. He wishes to avoid pouring any honey from one barrel to another, on account of the waste. Now, how is he to distribute the barrels?"

There are two different ways of doing it, and the girls asked their uncle to find both ways.

The professor's next puzzle was to take a large circular shortcake from the table and ask the girls to show how it might be divided into four equal parts by three cuts all of the same length. Of course it is easy enough with two cuts or four, but how is it to be done with three cuts?

The last puzzle was Muriel's. This is what she said.

"When my married sister was born, my father laid aside £5 for her and promised that on every succeeding birthday he would add £5. Although he kept his word, it is a curious fact that when my sister became twenty-one years of age the sum had only amounted to £25. Can you tell me how this came about?"

It certainly seems a little strange at first, for one would suppose that there must be a much larger amount, but it will be found to be quite correct.

(Mr. Dudeney's answers to the twelve riddles and puzzles contained in the above article will appear in THE GIRL'S REALM for January, 1902).

A NEW SPORT FOR GIRLS: SKATE SAILING.

This sail is triangular, and is attached to two bamboo poles of extreme lightness. One is upright, the other fastened to it half way down, and extends to the point of the triangle. Equipped with this sail, the skater accomplishes something like flying, so inconceivably rapid is the speed possible on smooth ice on a windy day. The exertion is not nearly so great as in ordinary skating. All that is necessary is to preserve the equilibrium and let the sail do the rest.

From an original drawing by B. E. MINNS.

THE GIRL CRUSOES.

A Tale of the Indian Ocean.

By Dr. GORDON STABLES, R.N.

Illustrated by HARRY ROUNTREE.

CHAPTER I.

LUCY AND LOTTIE.

"I AM tired of Zanzibar, Lottie," said Lucy Rae, as she stood at the widely open drawing-room window that overlooked the white sandy beach, the merchant vessels in the offing, the boats and canoes that glided hither and thither, and the blue of the Indian Ocean that stretched away and away to the limitless horizon. "Downright tired of it, sister, and tired of doing nothing. Now that father has gone on a cruise to Aden, it is duller than ever."

"It is a very lovely island, though," ventured Lottie.

Lottie was the quieter sister. She was seventeen, while Lucy was two years older. Really beautiful girls they were, both in face and figure.

"True, dear, true, but one gets weary after a time of sight-seeing even in Zanzibar, and charming though the woods be, the trees and wild flowers won't talk to one, you know."

"Oh, but, Lucy, I think they *do* talk to one!"

"Well, Lot, you are sentimental and romantic. I am simply and singularly matter-of-fact. Well, the war-ships have all gone for a time at all events; the German Consul has ceased to entertain, and the French too. There is far too much movement in your Frenchmen. That Consul's son is silly. He lacks calmness, you know, so that one feels downright self-conscious in his company."

"He is very polite, Lucy."

"Over polite. Always on the jump as it were. I think sometimes he'll jump out of his skin, which would be shocking, and very improper.

"It is too hot for hockey," she continued, "or even for lawn-tennis, and ping-pong is only fit for slow coaches. It is twelve months to-day, Lot, since we left dear old Devonport. Heigho! I wish the ships would return. Isn't Lieutenant Winslow very nice, Sissie?"

"Yes, and Commander Campbell is nice too."

"A mere matter of taste, dear. But I do believe that one night in the shrubbery, all among the fire-flies, Harry Winslow would have proposed, had not Auntie come pottering round to get up a rubber. Well, it mightn't have mattered much, but it would have been a proposal anyhow, and I haven't had one yet. Nineteen too! I tell you, Lot, I'm sick of it, and last night I lay a long time awake and thinking. You were sleeping as sweetly as a baby. There wasn't a sound but the buzz of the waves on the beach, the thud-thud of the Ghecko lizards killing moths on the wall, and now and then the shriek of those Arab sentry fellows. Well, before I dozed off, I quite made up my mind to do something, and I don't care much what it is, either."

"Nothing rash, I hope, Lucy?"

"No—just something odd to pass the time, and break the monotony of our lives. Auntie is very good and nice, of course, but—she is old-fashioned. Then we have no books except Thackeray and Dickens, and Tom's "Robinson Crusoe." On the whole, we might just as well be nuns as a British Consul's daughters."

Lucy stopped chattering for a few moments, then burst into a ringing laugh.

"I say, Lot. Happy thought! Why shouldn't we become Crusoes just for a week or two? I know the very island out here, and it isn't ten miles away."

"We should have to take Tom with us, Lucy."

"No, Lottie, no, boys are always a bother, especially brothers. You can row, and *I* can row, and we both can fish. I tell you what it is, sister Lot, the idea is splendid. But here comes Tom."

Tom was an English boy of fifteen, and he entered next minute, leading something with a string round its waist. That something made the girls shriek, and take refuge on the top of the sofa. It was a huge greyish-yellow lizard, such as are common in the beautiful woods of Zanzibar, fully four feet long.

"Oh, take it away. Take it away, you terrible Tom."

Terrible Tom retired grinning. He was a boy all over. Could shoot, and fish, and climb cocoa-nut trees like a nigger boy. He had just one fault; he always managed to be there when he wasn't wanted, and Lucy declared that but for this terrible Tom, she might have been—but there! never mind.

"O, we couldn't think of taking Tom, Lottie. And now, shall we order our hammocks?"

A great river of afternoon sunshine rolled into the drawing-room, and into this, from the shadows beyond, glided a tall black servant, with turbanned head, garments white as salt, and a jewelled crimson sash.

He bowed low, then stood as stiff and still as a marble statue.

"It is you, Haido, is it?" said Lucy, smiling.

"It is Haido, Meess Rae, and from the Prince he comes. Presents he brings, and mooch good wish." He waved his hand, and three slaves entered and squatted on the floor.

Now His Highness, the Arab Prince Sudgee, was very much in love with Lucy Rae, and these presents constituted his method of expressing it. Droll, but true! that Lucy did not know that her acceptance of the costly gifts would be looked upon as an encouragement to his suit. And the presents were droll also from an English girl's point of view. No jewellery, oh no, but a splendid elephant-tusk, a hippopotamus's tooth, a lion's skin, and two bags of cowries.

Lucy laughed merrily when Haido retired.

"A long engagement to an Arab prince," she said, "would mean the hiring of a loft of some kind to put the presents in."

"TOM ENTERED NEXT MINUTE, LEADING SOMETHING WITH A STRING ROUND ITS WAIST. THAT SOMETHING MADE THE GIRLS SHRIEK."

CHAPTER II.

PREPARATIONS.

EACH hammock was suspended from a long bamboo pole and borne aloft by a couple of sturdy negroes. Though the streets were very narrow and crowded, the hammocks were carried abreast, that the girls might talk together. Hindoos, Parsees, Arabs, Somalis, and slaves in dusky thousands, with here and there an independent Englishman, a heated, broiling, steaming crowd, which it was difficult to force a passage through.

Away on the outskirts, and before the two girls entered the beautiful woods or bush, where they meant to collect fresh pine-apples and mangoes, it was silent and deserted enough. And here they met Prince Sudgee himself. A very handsome and picturesque figure he looked, arrayed in full Arab dress, and mounted on a lovely white horse. This animal, below its saddle, had a crimson covering of gold mounted cloth, the stirrups like sandals, the bridle of leather and silk. There was nothing of the circus rider about Sudgee. He was as clear in skin as a Spaniard, to say the least, and exceedingly handsome. His dark dreamy eyes, perhaps, detracted somewhat from his otherwise manly appearance. But for this, the most fastidious male critic could scarcely have found a fault in this prince of Arab blood-royal.

When he met the girls, and they smiled recognition, he covered his face for a few moments with both hands, bending low towards the pommel, then rode quietly on. He meant to imply that Lucy's beauty dazzled him.

"Lot," said Lucy, a few minutes after this, "I think it would be rather nice to be a real princess, you know."

"O Lucy, I have half a mind to tell Lieutenant Campbell you would like to be a princess."

"Do, Lottie, and he may save me the trouble."

Lottie's arm was stretched over now to the sister's hammock, and she gently patted her on the arm.

"Don't talk so, dear. If one didn't know you, one would think you were——"

"What?"

"A flirt! And I'm sure you're not."

Zanzibar is an island in the Indian Ocean, on the East Coast of Africa, and within six degrees of the Equator, but out of sight of the mainland. Its woodlands or bush is wild enough in all conscience, yet there is not an evil beast therein, nor even a venomous snake that I have ever seen. What pen entrancing shall describe the beauty of its flowers, its birds and nature-painted lizards? Not mine. Nor the charm of the sky that smiles above it, nor the ineffably sweet blue of the ocean around. Do the wavelets always dance and sparkle on that ocean's breast, or lisp and sing on the coral sands? No, for as we shall presently see, no wilder tempests ever churned billows into foam than those that sometimes sweep down and over it.

The girls had quite a little picnic this evening in the bush; they found the fruit and the flowers they wanted, and in a long, delightful, quiet conversation, they arranged all about their proposed visit to the little isle out yonder on the horizon. Both were excellent sailors, and they promised themselves a most romantic and happy fortnight as Crusoes.

O yes, Auntie must be told. They would leave a letter for her, assuring the good lady of their safety, but warning her that nothing would induce them to return until the allotted time was up.

"It would be better to hire a boat, and load her up with everything a modern Crusoe needs."

"Indeed, indeed," said Lucy, "I don't mean that we shall starve. And I know where to lay my hands on just the boat, and where to find boys to help us to load."

"I suppose we'll have a tent, Siss?"

"Yes, and hammocks too, and pepper and salt, and potted meats, and jellies, and a sardine opener."

"And water?"

"A little cask of water, certainly, because I forget if there is a well on the island. But don't you bother your head, dear. Leave everything to me."

Lottie laughed at the thought of joys expected. "What a general you would have made, Lucy, had you only been a man!"

One of the hammock-bearers came humbly forward now, and smiling, pointed at a red gleam

that was shooting athwart a tall and feathery cocoa-nut tree.

It was the last red rays of the setting sun, and already the darkness was gathering in the woods beneath.

There was no time to lose, so fruit and flowers were stowed away in the hammocks, and presently off they swung, and managed to get clear of the bush, and into the main road, just as the stars began to twinkle on high.

Lucy had a little pistol pocket in her dress, and now she tapped it, to make sure it was not empty, for the suburbs of Zanzibar are dangerous after nightfall.

CHAPTER III.

FLYING FOR THEIR LIVES.

LUCY possessed herself of a small note-book and pencilled down everything she thought would be needed on the island, just as it occurred to her.

The hired boat was kept in a shed some distance from the Consulate, and near to the Arab burying ground. The loading up, which, owing to the inquisitiveness of their brother—terrible

"RAIN IN TORRENTS CAME LEAPING DOWN, THE WIND BLEW, AND LIGHTNING SEEMED TO HAVE SET THE WHOLE SEA ON FIRE."—(*b.* 192.)

Tom—had to be carried out quite stealthily, was real good fun. It took them a whole week.

Then, one moonlight night the two girls crept silently away from the great white house, and fearfully along the beach to the place of rendezvous. On the beach they could scarcely move a step without treading on a sea-bleached skull, for here slaves are exposed after their death that ants, and crabs, and beetles may bury them.

It was past midnight, and eeriesome enough in all conscience. Lottie clung to her sister's arm; she sometimes trembled a little, and I think she had already begun to repent of this mad escapade. But there was no fear about Lucy.

A shapely seventeen-feet boat, with a four feet breadth of beam, plenty of free-board, though loaded up, a mast to step, a jib and a mainsail, she was launched by the faithful blacks, then the girls took an oar each, and quickly rowed away.

It was certainly a heavenly night as yet, but a strange bank of cliff-like clouds lay along the western horizon, and lightning played incessantly behind it.

In about an hour's time, when miles off shore, cat's paws, then a steady breeze came over the sea, and Lucy gave the order "in oars," the mast was stepped and sails set.

Lottie was told off to watch the sheet, which was not made too fast, and the elder sister took the tiller, and glanced every moment at her little compass.

The bank of ugly clouds was rising, however, and she did not like it, so she started a song, and Lottie joined with her sweet girl-voice.

But the wind increased ten-fold. The monster-headed evil clouds swallowed up moon and stars, and when the island was reached at last, landing was found to be impossible, so high were the breakers. They had to fly, therefore, before the fearful storm. Literally fly for their lives.

Both girls had on sou'-westers and waterproofs.

"The sky is changed, and such a change! O night,
And storm and darkness, ye are wonderous things."

Rain in torrents came leaping down, and kept poor Lottie so busy baling, she had no time to be afraid. Lucy now held the sheet and tiller as well. The wind blew far too loudly for talking, and lightning seemed to have set the whole sea on fire. But the brave girl put the boat bows on to every threatening wave; and on they went, tossing on the billows.

There was moreover the danger of being pooped, and a less manageable boat would soon have foundered.

When battling with storms at sea, time passes quickly, but the boat must have been cracking on for hours at fearful speed. Both girls were almost exhausted, when suddenly, right in front of them, there seemed to rise from the ocean a blacker bank of clouds than yet had been seen. There was a gap in it, however, or perpendicular cleft, and for this Lucy steered instinctively.

In three minutes' time they were in still water, with all around them tall waving bush and trees.

"Down sail, Lottie, and down mast!"

Even before the command could be obeyed, the waving branches closed overhead, and the boat brought up on a shingly beach.

They were safe and sound for the present.

CHAPTER IV.

MAROONED.

AND about the same time, up from the sea leapt the great blood-red sun, and lo! it was day. Poor Lottie broke down now, and cried somewhat hysterically in her sister's arms, for the danger was past. Lucy kissed and soothed her, then they beached the boat, got out their hammocks, and slung them side by side under a tree. Lottie, tired and wet and weary, would have turned in, but——

"No," said Lucy, "change our wet clothes first, then supper, then sleep."

"Nobody will be looking, I suppose," said Lottie, timidly.

"O no, Siss," laughed Lucy, as she began to disrobe. "We are real Crusoes now."

What a delightful meal that was, for they were most unromantically hungry.

Cheek-by-jowl the hammocks were slung, so that Lottie could place her arm round Lucy, and so fall asleep like a baby.

The first thing they did when they awoke at noon was to discuss another meal, then explore the little island which was only about two miles long by one broad. It was uninhabited and

just as lonesome and lovely as any Crusoe could wish. The tent was erected on somewhat higher ground, whence they could gaze upon the sea all around them. But nothing was visible from their pitch. They must have been blown fully forty miles from the shores of Zanzibar.

But this did not trouble them, for on some fine day at the fortnight's end, Lucy would set sail and bear up once more for her tropical home.

Now the little island on which these girls were "crusoeing," lies quite out of the way of either ships or dhows. However, it mattered very little to either Lucy or her sister, that for nearly two whole weeks they saw never a speck on the ocean's blue, saving the floating sea-gulls or basking sharks. They were just as happy as the bright-winged birds that twittered low, but sweetly, in every bush and tree. They had plenty to eat, they could fish from the rocks or from their boat in the creek, and they had fruit galore. Lucy declared it was all so delightful, that they must stay on and "crusoe" for three weeks at least. And Lottie joyfully consented. "This is something like a picnic," said Lucy. "It is such a wonder that no one ever thought of it before. But, oh Lot, won't we have something to speak about when we get back to Devonport."

"Won't [we just!" said Lottie.

But the very next day something truly alarming took place. Lottie had left her sister to get dinner ready, and had gone all by herself to the other side of the island.

She came running back in less than half an hour, and rushed as if for protection into Lucy's arms.

"Oh!" she stammered, "I've s-s-seen a m-m-man!"

"Well, goodness! child, it isn't the first. What was he like?"

"Black and horrid, and he fled."

Lottie would not touch the tinned salmon and sweet potatoes, but no man, black or white, was going to spoil Lucy's appetite.

"LUCY'S PISTOL GAVE TONGUE THREE TIMES IN RAPID SUCCESSION. IT ONLY SUFFICED TO QUICKEN THE MAN'S MOTIONS."—(*p.* 194.)

She dined heartily. Then, revolver in hand, and with her trembling little sister by her side, she set out to scour the island.

Never a man was to be seen!

"It must have been a myth," she said.

"O no, Lucy, it wasn't a myth, but a man, an awful man."

Lucy liked the nights best, when the wind blew, and sang or sighed in the trees, and the hammocks swayed to and fro. But to-night there wasn't a breath to lift a leaf, and somehow she could not get Lottie's adventure out of her head. It kept her long awake, and found its way into her dreams, when at last she did fall asleep. It must have been near morning when she awoke with a start. A crescent moon shone in the west, and seemed sliding into the sea. She listened almost fearfully, and presently a strange rasping sound fell on her ears. She grasped her revolver and swung herself clear of the hammock. One glance at the sleeping Lottie, then in her sandals and night-dress she made at once for the creek. Diving in under the bush and trees, she speedily reached the shingle.

It was just as she had thought. The boat was already afloat, and being rowed rapidly along the creek, seawards, by the dusky thief.

"Come back," she cried, "or I'll fire!"

A laugh like that of a hyæna was the only response, and though her pistol now gave tongue three times in rapid succession, it only sufficed to scare the sea-birds, and quicken the man's motions. The next moment he had disappeared.

Lottie was still asleep when she got back. She would not wake her to tell her the terrible story. Not only was their hope of getting away from the island slender enough indeed, but the stolen boat had been their store-house, so all their provisions were gone.

How they managed to live for the next three weeks, puzzles me to tell. There was plenty of fish to be caught from the rocks, it is true, and there was fruit, and they had discovered a stream of water. Lucy, always brave and merry, assured Lottie that they were very well off indeed for Crusoes, that it was rare fun, and that by-and-by they were sure to be rescued by some passing dhow.

So Lottie had to be content, and just watch the sea. Another week passed by, somewhat more slowly now, for, knowing that the dreary rainy season would soon come on, Lucy herself was getting low-spirited. Only she would not show it.

But one morning—joyful sight—a very large dhow was seen standing in towards the island, and they did everything in their power to attract attention. They were successful, and in less than half an hour, safe on board the Prince of Sudgee's private dhow. It was, indeed, a splendid craft of the sort, and the saloon, into which the Prince himself conducted the girls, was most luxurious.

No one was ever more happy than the Prince appeared to be now, and he took small pains to conceal his joy, somewhat to Lucy's alarm, though Lottie was too young to harbour suspicion. Slaves placed sherbet on the table before them, and they drank. Then Lucy consulted her compass.

"But, Prince Sudgee," she said, "you are not steering for Zanzibar!"

"No, Miss Rae, no. We go not to Zanzibar for many months. We roam and sail on the beautiful sea. For this hour I have watched and prayed to Allah. He has heard my prayer. You are my prisoners, I will keep you as hostages until the Englishman, your father, shall pay me handsomely. The English I do hate. My hour of vengeance has arrived. Come, I will lead you to the cells."

He came a little nearer to her.

"Back," she cried, springing to her feet. "This is but a poor joke, Prince, if joke it is. Steer us at once to Zanzibar and we will forgive and thank you. Lay but a finger on me or Lottie, and you are a dead man. I am armed!"

"Put away the toy," he said, "beautiful tigress. In ten days' time you will be more calm."

Then he bowed and left the saloon.

Prince Sudgee found he had made a mistake. English girls are not to be frightened by threats as Arabs may be. He changed his tactics. He did all in his power now to show them kindness, and two girl slaves were told off to wait upon them.

"You are safe with me," he told them, "but

to Zanzibar I cannot go yet. I am a slaver, and the British have found it out."

How wearily the days went by. They would have given worlds to be back once more on their island. What a sad ending to their Crusoe-picnic. Here they were prisoners, and at the mercy of an Arab prince and slaver. No wonder that even Lucy trembled to think of what might be before them.

But from the first, knowing her power, she determined to carry on with a high hand on board the dhow-yacht *Zoona*. Sudgee treated her as if she were an empress and he a slave; poor Lottie wondered at her sister's imperious manner towards him. He must, and did obey her slightest behest. By day, the saloon was the dining-room, and Sudgee, forsooth, was graciously permitted to sit below the salt. By night, it was the girls' state-room, and was carefully bolted, and the revolver placed beside the couch.

But one morning early, they were awakened by a terrible noise, and rushing about on deck. They could hear the prince's voice above all the din giving hurried orders.

The girls were soon dressed and found their way to the poop, just as a shell burst overhead, its fragments pattering on the sea. The *Zoona* was being chased by a fleet cruiser.

"Come below, Meess. Quick! Quick! De Prince he killee you foh true!"

It was one of the little slave girls that Lucy had befriended.

This poor child hid both sisters. So they sat in the darkness trembling, while the battle raged fiercely overhead, for these Arabs made a stout and terrible resistance. It was sword and revolver *versus* cutlass. But our British blue-jackets won at last. Don't they always? In less than twenty minutes the *Zoona* was captured and the prince a prisoner.

And here was father hugging both his girls in his arms.

And there was handsome Lieutenant Winslow and Commander Campbell, only waiting to be recognised, as it were.

There was a double wedding at Zanzibar just six months after.

That is precisely how it ended.

Xmas Jollity:

New Games for Holiday Festivities.

By BEATRICE BARHAM.

A GUEST AT A SHEET AND PILLOW-CASE PARTY
In the dress of a Nun.

"WHAT shall we do next?" is a question which engrosses a good deal of attention nowadays—especially during holiday time. Nobody is content to do anything for very long. Even when we play, we prefer, if possible, to speed the flying hour with something we never played before. The games we played last season are gone—with last year's snows, and last year's hats and other fleeting joys.

The Salmagundi Party is a modern entertainment which appeals strongly to the "What shall we do next?" people. Indeed, it is a form of diversion which has charms for almost everyone, as it gives scope for almost every kind of talent, and may be varied to suit the tastes and ages of the company.

The Salmagundi Party is, as the name implies, a mixture. Small tables are employed, arranged as for Progressive Whist, and at each of these, which may hold four or six people, according as the case may be, a different game is played. The winners at each table "progress" to the next, and the couple who have won most points during the evening are the final winners.

A suitable set of games to play at the different tables would be a card game at the first, tiddleywinks at another, a needle-threading and tack-driving competition, dominoes and ping-pong ruling at others—the latter, of course, requiring a larger table. A good idea for one table is to give points for the best parody on some well-known song, such as "Come into the Garden, Maud," or if preferred, an original Mother Goose Melody may be substituted. Other games can, of course, be used as the numbers playing, or the occasion may dictate.

In the needle-threading and tack-driving competition, the winners are the gentlemen who can thread the greatest number of needles in a given time, while the ladies drive as many tacks as possible into a box. It is exceedingly amusing to watch the efforts of a male competitor who can, only by a mighty effort and after long endeavour, succeed in finding the eye of a darning needle.

Among recent favourites, the Book and Play Title parties of last winter were too entertaining to be allowed to disappear without reluctance. Besides, they engendered a habit which it was difficult to entirely throw off; a habit of looking for one's neighbour's badge, and wondering what she represented, and an inclination to ask inquisitive questions which could not be subdued in a moment.

A successor to these games which is very entertaining and almost more amusing is known as the Famous Person Party. Indeed, it is a kind of reversal of the same idea—a sort of Alice Through the Looking Glass Book Party—for, in place of the familiar task of puzzling over one's neighbour, one must look towards home, the object being to solve one's own identity. In other words, instead of bearing some enigmatic symbol proudly in front for the puzzlement of others, a plainly-written label bearing the name of some famous personage is surreptitiously pinned by the hostess, or some one deputed by her, upon the back of each arriving guest. The others, who can, of course, read this label—which the victim naturally cannot do—must

address her and treat her in every particular as if she were indeed the person whose name she for the moment bears. It is the not too easy task of each person to deduce from the remarks addressed to him what may be that hidden name which lurks in such aggravating but unattainable nearness.

If people display a polite disinclination to turn their backs, and address one with an air of deference, it may fairly be concluded that one is Queen somebody. The remainder of the title must be the subject for further research, and energetic conversation with one's friends.

It is a terrible punishment for historical shortcomings to bear upon one's back the name of a person as to whose doings and sayings one ought to be possessed of complete information, but of whom, alas! one is in deplorable ignorance. The only hope under these circumstances is a friendly mirror and a glance over one's shoulder—but this, of course, would never be resorted to by any honourable celebrity.

A party which has of late had a great vogue in America, is the Cent Party. In England it doubles in value and figures as a Penny Party. Hostesses who dread heavy expenses will naturally view with favour an entertainment having such obviously economical tendencies.

In the first place each guest is supplied with a nice bright penny. They are also given a card on which is written a list of things which they are expected to find upon the coin in question.

It is said that there are one hundred objects to be found upon a cent, and a little diligent research would probably disclose quite as many on a penny; as a matter of mere money value, it ought to have just twice the number, being of double the worth.

Among the things to be found on a penny are the following, and ingenious minds will be able to quickly add to the list.

A fruit . . . . . The date.
Flowers . . . . . Tulips.
Small Animals . . . . Hares.
Something which proves the thrift of the English nation . . . . . A sovereign unchanged for fifty years.
A land measure . . . . . A foot.
Implements of warfare . . . . Arms.
Something worth sixty times this coin . . . . . A crown.
Something of still greater value . . . . . A sovereign.
A recent book by Marie Corelli . . . . . The Greatest Queen in the World.

Prizes are usually given for the most complete set of answers, one for the ladies and one for the gentlemen. A coin mounted as a charm for the watch chain, or as a pin is appropriate. The last threepenny pieces coined during the reign of Queen Victoria, and set with tiny gems are to be bought very inexpensively, and form a very pretty little memento.

Sometimes a small additional prize is given for the best original discovery of some fresh object to be found upon the penny. A prize discovery was as follows:—

Something which does not prevent sea-sickness . . . . . Britannia ruling the waves.

In distributing the pennies care should be taken that they are all of the same issue.

A party of an entirely different nature—although the big copper coin is also an important feature of it—is the Penny Toy Party. All the guests are requested to bring with them the best article that they can purchase

A PENNY TOY PARTY: A TABLE AS IT LOOKED WHEN THE GUESTS HAD DEPOSITED THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS.

A BOULOGNE FISH-WIFE: A GUEST, TOO, AT A SHEET AND PILLOW-CASE PARTY.

for the sum of one penny. It is exceedingly instructive to discover the number of things which can be obtained for this not extravagant figure.

In searching for an object which shall represent good value for one's money—and an amount of "shopping" which is quite out of proportion to the expenditure, is frequently indulged in—one arrives at the conclusion that a penny is really almost all that one need ever pay for anything, so great is the variety of both useful and ornamental articles to be obtained for that modest sum.

When the guests arrive, the penny articles are all exhibited upon a table, and votes are taken as to who has spent her money to the best advantage.

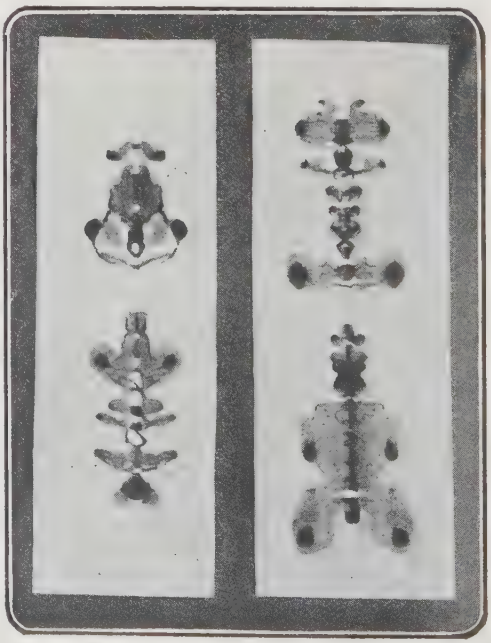
A prize—the same, be it said, *not* a penny article—is given to the most successful competitor, and then comes the most interesting feature of the entertainment, namely, the disposing of the wares by auction to the highest bidder.

It may be mentioned that no limit is fixed as to the amount of the bids. Indeed, the enormous sum of twenty or thirty times the original value is frequently given, although, alas! some unfortunate articles are knocked down for the paltry offer of a farthing!

The money gained by the auction is given to a charity. This is a suggestion which seems somehow to call to mind a certain small white cot in the Great Ormond Street Hospital. That little cot where is always to be found some suffering child who is being cared for by the efforts of those girls who, not content merely to themselves enjoy life and all its "games," both serious and gay, are eager also to help those less fortunate than themselves.

An amusement which is not only entertaining in itself, but of great service in training the eye and memory, is known as "Observations." It is, practically, the same game which was played with so much enjoyment by Rudyard Kipling's little Kim in the studio of Lurgan Sahib, at Simla, as a preparation for his future work. Kim played it with precious stones and other valuable objects, but people who are not preparing for what Kim called the "Great Game" in India, are content to play with commonplace accessories.

In another room from that in which the party are gathered is prepared a table. On it is placed a heterogeneous collection of all sorts and kinds of things. Ornaments, glasses, penholders, books, small pictures—in fact, any little objects which may be at hand. Then, in turn, each guest is taken alone into the room and permitted to view the table for a given space of time. It may be one or two minutes (by the watch, for this is one of the occasions when it is difficult to persuade the player of the flight of time), according to the number of articles displayed. They are then escorted from the room and given a pencil and paper on which to record a list of as many as possible of the things they remember having seen upon the table. The winner is, of course, the person who can remember the greatest number of articles.



A GOBLIN BLOT PARTY: THE BLOTS OF ADELINA PATTI AND THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

It is very interesting to note the difference between people in their ability in this particular direction. With some, a glance seems to stamp on the mind what passes before the eye, whilst others must needs commit to memory each separate article, if the remembrance of them is to be retained.

The game of Observations is said to be part of the training which is given to the pupils in a certain school where budding Sherlock Holmeses are taught their duties.

A fascinating amusement

which never palls is soap bubble-blowing. It cannot claim to be new, but of late it has had a revival and has grown more ambitious in its tendencies. There are exhibitions of skilled bubble-blowing bubble-blowing competitions, and various kinds of bubble games. At the first named, examples are shown of the most wonderful things which may be done by practised hands, with the exquisite, fleeting globes of a thousand changing tints, which, after all, are not so frail as one is accustomed to fancy.

Bubbles may be blown with flowers inside them, reflecting the brilliant colours in every gleaming curve. Big bubbles may be blown enveloping tiny bubbles, and many other much more elaborate achievements than these.

IT IS A DAINTY FANCY TO DECORATE A MINIATURE JAPANESE TREE WITH THE PRIZES WHICH LATER IN THE EVENING WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO THE GUESTS.

A bubble-blowing entertainment affords a charming pastime for an afternoon or evening. In the first place the floor must be covered with something woollen. A drugget will answer, or old woollen curtains serve the purpose admirably. Soap suds should be ready prepared, and little basins filled with the mixture. A teaspoonful of glycerine added to each basin will make the colours still more glowing, and will also render the bubbles more durable.

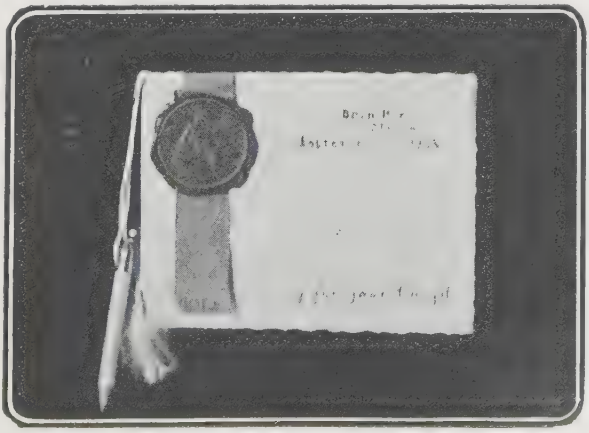
A new clay pipe, decorated with a dainty bow of ribbon, should be provided for each person. At the toy shops various devices may be bought to use in place of pipes for blowing bubbles; glass tubes, straws, quills with a kind of small cardboard horn attached, and there is one little affair called a bubbler, which has a tiny tablet of soap attached to the end, making suds unnecessary.

Many people, however, have an old-fashioned weakness for a pipe.

Among the numerous items which may be included at a bubble competition are: who can blow the biggest bubble, who can blow the bubble which shall last the longest, who can blow the greatest number of bubbles in a given time, each one to reach the ground, and finally, a game of bubble ping-pong. This may be played with the ping-pong net stretched over a woollen table-cloth, or in place of the net, a piece of tape may be used instead. It may be played by two persons, or the company may be divided into sides and stand at each end of the table. One person is called the umpire, and sits at the side of the table and blows the bubbles. When a bubble is wafted on to the table it must be the endeavour of each side, by lightly blowing to prevent it from ending its pretty existence on their side of the line. On whatever side the bubble finally explodes, it counts a point against that party.

Another engrossing holiday amusement which has about it something of the same soothing charm as blowing bubbles is the making of Goblin Blots.

It is little short of uncanny to find the strange little figures which appear when called up by the aid of a good coarse nib. An hour or two may be very speedily passed in manufacturing the weird little black goblins, which assume all sorts of extraordinary shapes, and at the end of that time a small prize may be given for the



A PROGRAMME AT A "PENNY PARTY."

best goblin. The method of proceeding is to deal out to each person plenty of unlined scribbling paper, and a coarse pen, and to place within reach a generous supply of ink. Then write upon the paper a word or two—one's own name is always useful at times like this—and before the ink has time to dry, fold the paper sharply down the middle of the name and flatten it smoothly out with the finger nail. On opening the paper there will appear a grotesque figure of some sort —or two if two names have been written.

Too fine a pen will produce bony skeletons, while one which is too broad will produce uninteresting formless blots. A little practice will teach the happy medium.

Fancy Dress entertainments are always favourites in one form or another, and few are more enjoyable than the Sheet and Pillow-case Party. The guests are of course expected to make their appearance gowned in the sweet simplicity of a sheet and pillow case. This may sound at first somewhat extreme in its plainness, but as a matter of fact any number of charming costumes may be evolved from the two articles in question—a practical illustration of the truth that our present mode of dressing is far more elaborate than is at all necessary.

A JACK HORNER PIE:

At children's parties it greatly adds to the general gaiety to stuff a capacious "pie" with presents which the tiny guests draw forth for themselves by means of ribbons.

At a party of this description which was recently given in a hotel at a large winter resort, the guests were allowed half an hour only, in which to don their snowy apparel. After dinner, at which everyone appeared in ordinary dress, a bell rang and all competitors retired. No limit was placed on the number of "dressers" permitted. In half an hour another bell rang for everyone to reassemble, and it was a very quaint and pretty sight to see the white-garbed figures entering the brilliantly lighted and prettily decorated room.

On this particular occasion prizes were given by the management for the most tastefully costumed lady and one for the best man's dress. The two carrying off the honours were a demure Charity-school girl, and a swarthy (walnut juice) Arab Chief with a voluminous (pillow-case) turban on his head.

The Charity-school maiden wore a fully pleated skirt of ankle length, a full bodice, and a demure cape.

Other very successful dresses were a Boulogne fishwife with a fine, spreading fan-shaped head-dress composed of a frilled pillow-case, a demure nun with one or two golden curls straying beneath a snowy coif, and numerous Greek and Roman maidens. There were also Roman senators in more or less gracefully draped togas, a Greek slave who was generally taken for a mad Highlander, several Carmelite monks and a sprinkling of *chefs*. These were the serious minded folk, but there were also frivolous spirits gambolling about in less graceful garb. One gentleman, for instance, appeared as a fearsome-looking ghost, and in his zeal after realism he had recklessly burned eyeholes in the sheet. A tall youth came as "Baby," looking a rather overgrown infant in a long white dress tied under the arms.

A Black and White Entertainment is another capital game for winter evenings. The requirements for it are few and simple. One must have a large cotton or linen sheet, a lamp, and a few willing young folks to lend a helping hand.

If the invitations be written, have a small black figure either pasted on a white card or done in Indian ink, and at the bottom of the card may also be added the line, "Coming events cast their shadows before."

As for the entertainment, have the sheet stretched smoothly across the space left by the folding doors, or any wide doors between rooms or hall, place the lamp on a low stool or the floor, put out all other lights but this one, or have it so arranged that they can be shut off or turned on at will, and the performance is ready to begin.

Each guest is furnished with a pencil, and a card with figures on it indicating the number of shadowgraphs to be thrown on the screen. These shadow-

graphs are little scenes acted out to illustrate the name of some book. In the intervals between the shadow-pictures the light may be turned on in the front room, and the guests write on their cards the name of the book which the shadowgraph is supposed to represent, and also the name of the author of the book. There should be book prizes for those who guess the greatest number of titles.

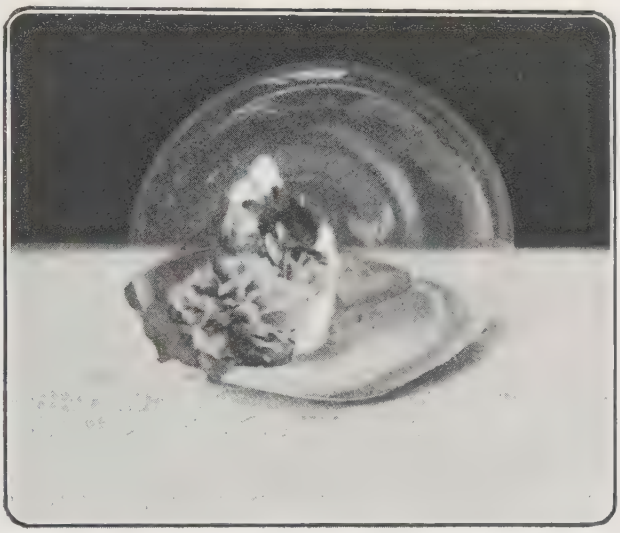
The first shadowgraph may be a man trying to thread a needle. Evidently he is a bachelor, and some quick-witted person silently guesses, "When a Man's Single," by Barrie, and writes it down.

Two lovers having an affectionate parting; "Good-bye, Sweetheart!" by Rhoda Broughton.

A man reading a newspaper or book and laughing heartily is "The Man Who Laughs," by Victor Hugo.

A small boy looking longingly at an apple hanging within reach must mean "A Terrible Temptation," by Charles Reade.

An old-fashioned arm-chair, "Grandfather's Chair," by Hawthorne.



A BUBBLE PARTY: A ROSE INSIDE A SOAP BUBBLE.
It won the prize at a party as "the prettiest bubble."

A trio of soldiers' "Soldiers Three," by Kipling.

A young man indolently smoking his pipe could represent "My Lady Nicotine," by Barrie.

A labourer shovelling snow (snow can be represented by wads of loose cotton) is apt to prove a poser, unless some one is bright enough to guess "The Pathfinder," by Fenimore Cooper.

A small girl disappearing across the screen, while a woman endeavours to attract her attention and have her return, is "Called Back," by Hugh Conway.

A large figure 4, "The Sign of Four," by Conan Doyle.

An Irishman or dude trying unsuccessfully to light a pipe or cigarette might be written down as "The Light That Failed," by Kipling.

A SOAP BUBBLE PARTY: IMPLEMENTS FOR FANCY BUBBLE BLOWING.

A soldier parting from his mother or wife, "He Went for a Soldier," by John Strange Winter.

A peddler with a pack and a hooked nose, "The Wandering Jew," by Eugene Sue.

A small boy with a hump on his shoulders, "The Black Dwarf," by Sir Walter Scott.

Other shadowgraphs may be used instead of those I have mentioned. The entertainment has the charm of novelty to recommend it to the hostess seeking for some light method of passing a pleasant evening with a few friends and acquaintances.

A pleasant feature in connection with many of the winter festivities is the presenting of little gifts as souvenirs of the occasion. It adds much to the effect when the presentation can be accompanied by some graceful little ceremony. Of course, nothing can exceed the charms of the time-honoured Christmas tree as a means of distributing the gifts, but there are various other pretty devices and ideas which may sometimes be more convenient or preferred as a novelty.

One dainty method is to make the distribution *à la Japonais*. In this case the principal requirement is a little miniature imitation Japanese almond tree. The branches may be bought at any of the dealers in Japanese curios or fabrics, and may easily be wired into a tree of whatever size is desired. Each little rosy, pinky blossom is then marked plainly with a number, there being as many blossoms as guests.

The tree is given a conspicuous place of honour on a piece of Japanese embroidery, the rooms lighted with Japanese paper lanterns, and the hostess or whoever presides over the revels is dressed in Japanese costume.

Each guest is invited to pluck a blossom from the tree, and is, in exchange, given a packet marked with the number corresponding to that inscribed upon the rosy petals. The presents, may, if wished, be wrapped in pretty little Japanese rice-paper serviettes, and various other Japanese features may be introduced according to taste.

A mode of receiving one's gift which lends to it an added joy, is when one has the pleasure of oneself extracting it from a Jack Horner Pie.

This is a very popular dish at children's parties.

Its manufacture does not call for any great culinary knowledge, but its contents are always greatly appreciated by those who are privileged to receive a share.

As a matter of fact this strange pie, which is made in the very largest dish procurable, has its capacious interior stuffed with tiny presents, each neatly wrapped in fancy paper and tied with bright coloured baby ribbon, a streamer half a yard in length being left at the end of each bow. The top crust is very "light," being composed of tissue paper with tiny slits made all over it, through which appear the ends of the ribbons.

THE GAME OF OBSERVATIONS: A TABLE SET READY.

The pie may either be carried with *éclat* into the drawing-room, or it may serve as a feature of the supper.

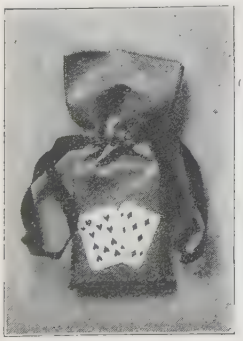
When the time comes to "serve" it, every-one, beginning with the youngest, is instructed to take an end of ribbon and draw forth for themselves the present attached to the other end. It is a good plan to fill in the cracks between the presents with sweets—which must not be sticky ones—as these serve to lighten the regret which is felt when the bottom of the dish becomes too visible.

HOME-MADE CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

And how to make them.

THE MR. "PING-PONG CHINAMAN" PINCUSHION,
Whose head is a ping-pong ball. His body is stuffed with saw-dust.

JUST as surely as the leaves come out on trees with the warmth and brightness of the spring-time, so in winter, at the very mention of Christmas, gifts grow and blossom, and finally await distribution on the 25th of December. And up to that time, everyone is more or less puzzled to discover something new, which may speak of other things than a present bought in the shops, to be had by anyone who can afford to pay for it. The best and the cleverest gifts are often those somethings made out of nothing, which dainty work and nimble wits have endowed with a special value. In the accompanying hints as to the making of some of these, I include descriptions of presents for old and young, and in particular, a set of presents which girls may make for very little girls.



A PRESENT TO A LOVER OF "PATIENCE."
A pretty and inexpensive case for playing cards.

For grown-up people, I recommend the following gifts. First, for those ladies who love playing "Patience" of an evening, a pretty and inexpensive present is a case for playing cards. Buy half a yard of ribbon an inch and a-half wider than the cards selected. Overcast the seams with silk of same colour, make deep hems, and leave a place for the draw-string, which should be a narrow ribbon of the same colour, or of a colour that makes a pretty contrast. Sew on one side two cards taken from a miniature pack, or else paint on white silk or linen in imitation of cards, and sew on in appliqué.

Case for Cards.

Out of ribbon may also be made the twine bag, illustrated here. It requires half a yard each of two shades of ribbon. It depends upon whom the gift is to go to what colours ought to be used, but where club colours would be appropriate, or THE GIRL'S REALM Guild colours, may be used, a double interest is attached to the gift. Cover a circular piece of cardboard on both sides with ribbon. Then cut the remaining ribbon into four equal pieces, and alternating the colours, sew the edges together three-quarters of the way up; point the ends, and draw with a draw-string of narrow ribbon to match. Sew the other end on to the disc.

A Twine Bag (made of Guild Colours.)

AN ENGAGEMENT PAD.
Made out of cardboard and linen.

The width of ribbon used must depend upon the size of the ball of twine intended for the bag.

Work Cases.

The work-case shown in the illustration may be made in linen or silk. The outside of this particular case is of sea-green silk, embossed with two little velvet sprigs. But plain silk embroidered with these has an even prettier effect. The inside is of salmon-coloured satin. The cord is of white silk. When in use, it lies flat on the lap or table, and by lifting it by the tassels it closes, and the contents are safe from dust or from being upset. As is evident from the illustration, the case is made out of a square of silk. The outer edges of silk and lining are sewn together. Three pieces of cardboard are introduced to give the base and the sides. In between each piece the two coverings are feathered together. A loose edge of two inches is left at the sides, and the width of the sides added to two inches is allowed for the loose parts which crinkle up with the tightening of the cord. Little loops of baby-ribbon are attached to the case at intervals, and through these the double cord must run. Needle-books and pin-cushions may be added to the inside of the case.

Engagement Pads.

Not the least among Christmas gifts are the calendars and engagement pads, which are to last people through a new year, and be a daily pleasant reminder of the friends who constructed them. For a girl who paints, the accompanying engagement pad offers chances for pretty work. It is of linen stretched on cardboard to the size of 23 by 11 inches. The seven pockets (6½ by 2 inches) are of cardboard tinted to match the linen. Little triangular pieces are introduced at the sides and fixed there, point downwards, with stickphast, to form the pockets. On each pocket the days of the week must be neatly printed. One's own invention ought to be used for the design in water-colour, which occupies the part left vacant by the pockets. The design in this instance is of purple violets on a grey-green background.

A very simple Engagement Pad.

One of the simplest and most useful of engagement pads may be made out of the blocks for scribbling purposes, which are easily to be had in the shops. They are usually provided with detachable leaves. Buy a yard and a-half of ribbon of a width according to depth of sides of pad. Place it neatly round the four sides, so that the edge does not interfere with the detachment of the leaves. At the top, attach a bow of ribbon for hanging, and the pad is completed.

A Seaweed Calendar.

Girls who have spent a summer by the sea-shore, and have made all manner of rare collections of "the flowers of the ocean," may utilise them in a pretty manner by fixing them into a seaweed calendar. After the sea-weed has been carefully pressed, group it into a pretty design according to illustration, and carefully fasten it on to cardboard with a little gum arabic. Have this covered with glass, and framed in an ordinary photograph frame. Afterwards attach a calendar to the glass.

A SEAWEED CALENDAR.
A dainty way of utilising your seaweed collection for a Christmas present.

Golf Score.

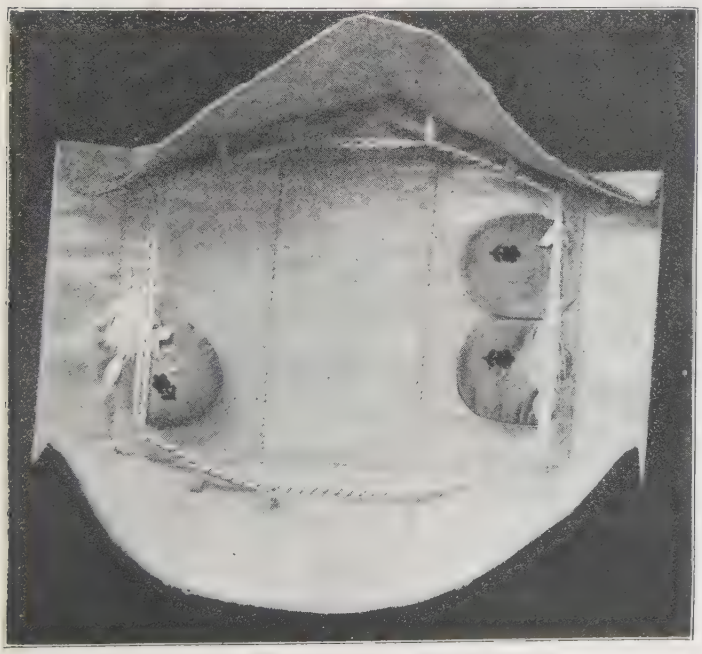
To a girl who golfs no prettier or more useful gift can be given than the neat book-chatelaine for scoring, which I shall describe. This little reticule serves both as a change purse, and as a case for golf score. It is made of Suède kid in any suitable colour. The back is stiffened by means of cardboard. The clasps are snappers such as are used for gloves and the fastenings of skirts. The miniature golf-stick is a toy attached by means of silk cord. At the top is a loop to be passed over the belt. This may all be made in cloth if desired. The structure is quite simple. First a strip is formed into book shape with the sides overcast, and a tuck run along what would be the back of the book (which hangs downwards in the reticule) for a pencil to be run in. The little scoring pad slips into the top end, which is left open, and which should have a curved finger entry provided. The change-purse is added, and must be stitched evenly in to the sides. With the exception of the cardboard at the back, this chatelaine purse is left soft and pliable.

THE WORK CASE, OUTSIDE VIEW.

The fashion of wearing a little protecting cambric collar over a blouse stock or collar is becoming every day more decided amongst us. Dainty, hand-worked presents may be made of these. They demand the same fine work as do handkerchiefs.

Hand-made Stock Collars and Cuffs.

Some are embroidered in plain, circular shape, but the prettiest are in points, with either one, two, or three points showing in each side, and attached to a cambric band which, going inside the blouse collar are invisible when worn. Cuffs to match are included in the set, and together make a very pretty present.



A PRETTY WORK CASE, MADE IN LINEN OR SILK; THE INSIDE VIEW.

A Playhouse Book.

Among the presents which are either to be made by, or which are to entertain, very little girls, I include the following. It is this—a Playhous Book, a book which is a real playhouse, and which is ready for entertainment and enjoyment almost as soon as it is begun. A good way in which to get it ready to give as a present to a little girl, is to prepare the first pages, so that she may have the pleasure of completing it at will. In the first place, a scrap

book is bought. The front or number one page must be left blank, and on the second page, and on the back of the first, the house begins. The page is tinted to represent the walls of a house, and into this is pasted doors and windows, cut from magazines and advertisements, or painted if the house-builder is clever. The door must open, also the windows, and behind the latter, little screens must be fastened to give a thoroughly life-like appearance to the whole. When the door opens, the hall beyond (on the next page) is to be seen. A garden path should lead up to this door (from the back of page number one), and grass, green tinted, should be painted in on either side. Flowers may grow up the walls, and for these, pictures in magazines may be cut, or flowers taken out of ladies' hats in advertisements, and coloured.

A BAG TO HOLD STRING.
It looks dainty in Guild Colours.

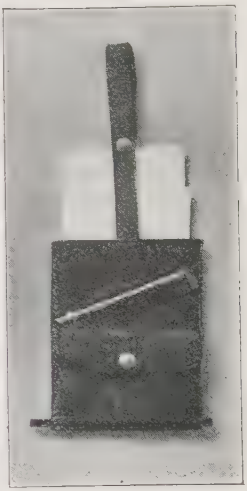
One enters at the front door, as it were, and passes on to the next page which shows the hall, and admits of a variety of treatment. The upright page is covered with some pretty paper, and on it are arranged stairs, chandeliers, and pasted against it may be chairs, tables, etc. The horizontal page is always kept for a floor, and may be covered with carpets or rugs, either cut from advertisements in magazines and newspapers or manufactured by the nimble fingers of the house builder.

Advertisements and picture-cards will be found to contain almost everything necessary in the way of furniture and suggestions for a house of this kind, but sometimes it is desirable to make the furniture to stand round on the carpet instead of being pasted against the wall, and then it is cut from Bristol board and kept in a box ready for use when wanted.

Sometimes arches can be made, leading from one room to another, and to obtain the best results, doors should be made to open wherever that is possible

It will be found much more interesting if the doors to washstands, cabinets, and sideboards be made so that they will open also.

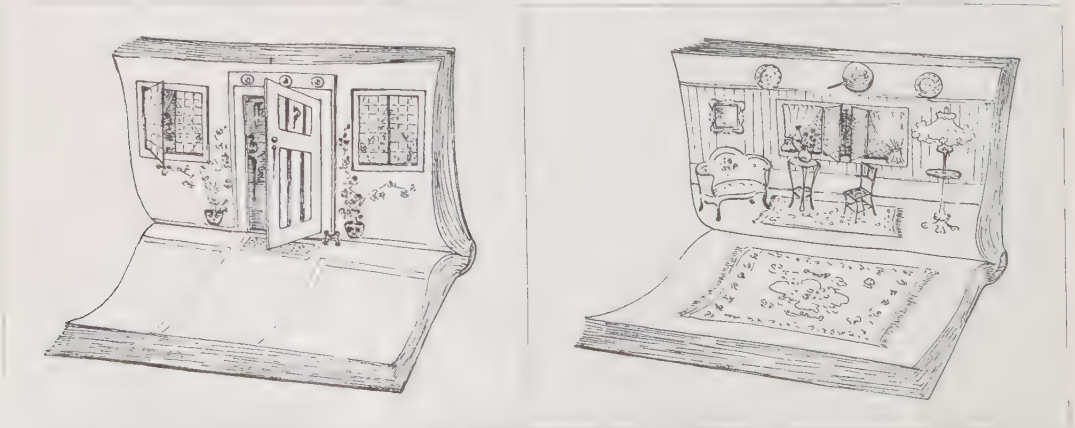
The materials needed for all this luxury are simple. A quantity of pretty paper of any kind or colour—odds and ends work in admirably—lace from chocolate boxes, water-colour paints or coloured crayons, and pictured advertisements. The good times to be derived from this are inestimable.



A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR THE GOLF GIRL.
A neat book chatelaine for scoring, made in Suede Kid.

The Ping-Pong Pin-Cushion.

One of the quaintest of Christmas gifts comes as a result of ping-pong. A ping-pong ball can be utilised and beautified to such an extent, that a prim little Chinaman as a pin-cushion is the result. Make a pincushion of bran, in sausage shape. For a base, cover a circular piece of cardboard with sateen. Make a kimono of bright-coloured print, put a wire through one sleeve attached to a racquet of cardboard, and on top of it all place a ping-pong ball which has been decorated by a pig-tail in pleated black silk twist, gummed on by a circular piece of black silk. The features of Mr. Ping-Pong Chinaman must be plainly marked in Indian ink The ball is sewn on by means of pierced holes, which leave enough room for the thread to pass easily through from one hole to the other.



THE FRONT DOOR AND DRAWING-ROOM OF A PLAYHOUSE BOOK.
Always an acceptable gift to children.

The Children's Own Corner.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

This spirited drawing by Violet Nesbitt Kemp is awarded a Diploma in the Drawing Competition.

My Dear Little People,—

As this is the Christmas Number, I shall arrange about your prizes for this month, instead of next, as I said in my last chat that I would.

I have had many nice stories sent in for the Children's Competition, mostly about animals and picnics. I am so glad to see how many of my children love animals.

I sometimes think that if only *all* children were to learn to love and understand them, by the time those children were men and women, we should have such a happy world that no grown-up person of to-day would recognise it for the same one that he had known for so long. And well, indeed, might he fail to recognise it for it would not, in truth, be the same world, but one quite new and radiant. Think what it would mean if each boy and girl felt in honour bound to be gentle to all weaker creatures, just because they were weaker; not merely the horses, and dogs, and birds that are so easy to love because they love us so devotedly, but the poor, unbeautiful, unattractive things that people shrink from, and sometimes actually hurt because of their misfortune (and how terrible a misfortune)—the toad, the frog, the spider, the blackbeetle, and all the great multitude of helpless and hated creatures who are born like that, poor things, without being consulted.

Surely those children growing up to feel it cowardly to hurt the weak and unfortunate, would not be likely to be hard and cruel and selfish towards their fellow men and women. And so, just by being themselves, they would make a much happier and better world than we now have to live in. And it is delightful to remember, that every child, no matter how small and weak, can at this moment be learning to make that beautiful new world, by being kind and tender to everything still more small and weak.

I was very pleased with the account of the mouse by Freda Phillips, and was so glad the silent pleading of the little captive was not in vain.

The *menu* of its dinners is very pretty and amusing. What I used to like best, when I was a child, was to entice wild creatures—mice or birds—to come to me of their own accord, to be fed, just for friendliness, without the help of cages. That was a real delight, as Freda Phillips would find if she would muster her patience and try it.

I have not given the prize to this paper, although I like it so much, because the prize was offered for the best story, and this is not exactly a story. It gets the 2nd prize.

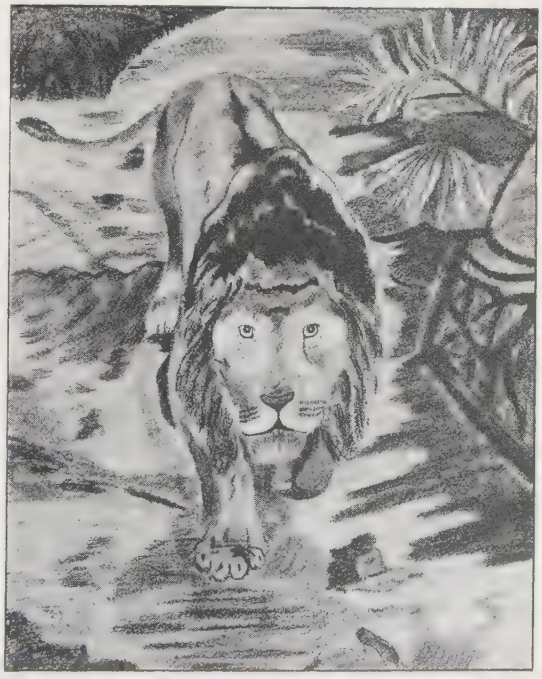
The first prize has been given to the author of *Fire*, Dorothy Whatley, "Ardmore," Pond Road, Blackheath, because that is a short story told in what is called a dramatic way. The writer begins at once to show what it is about, and just at the moment when it is actually happening, the burning of the barn in which the baby had been left asleep. Then Dorothy, without pause, tells how she rushes off to the flaming building, sees the fire and the smoke, and finally rescues the baby. I publish Dorothy's story here.

A FIRE.

"Quick! Joan, quick!—the shed—it's on fire—Baby's there!"

I rushed across the field, feeling dazed at this announcement. I remembered leaving Baby on the hay at one end of the shed.

"Ronald," I called back, to my small brother, who had given the alarm, "run and fetch the gardeners."



THE BLOOD TRAIL.

The Prize Drawing by Dollie Phillips (aged 13).

I ran on, half falling over some wire netting, a flower-pot or a log of wood; once I narrowly escaped slipping into the pond.

At last I reached the shed, one end was all ablaze, and in the other Baby lay fast asleep, perched on top of a pile of hay.

Should I ever reach her! The hay was heaped up high and I was small; climbing up I caught her dress,—her arm,—the hay slipped, and we both fell heavily. Half stunned I lay for a moment forgetting the fire, Baby, everything. My thoughts returning to me, I jumped up, picked up Baby, and was just pushing my way through old chairs, wheelbarrows, planks, etc., when two men ran up in hot haste, and dragged us out of the shed. Nearly all of the shed was burnt, but we were saved; and till this day I have not forgotten the agony of that afternoon."

The reason for choosing this story for the prize, although there are many other nicely written papers, is that it is of the real nature of a story.

"A Picnic on the Shores of the Lake of Como," by DIANA STOPFORD SACKVILLE; "De Wet, the story of a day," by VIOLET ROBINSON, are both good. DOROTHY HUMPHREY'S little account of "Old King," the ourang-outang, is pathetic and nicely written. NETTIE LAWTON, LOUIE PORTER, GWEN MICHAEL, FLORA EMBERSON, MADGE COOK, MURIEL JACKSON, "VIRGINIA," WINIFRED MARY HARMAN and WINIFRED BEDFORD, who writes from Mussoorie, N.W.P., India, have all written stories of adventure and of animal characteristics that deserve to be mentioned.

The Prize Drawings.

And now that I have settled which of my children are to have the prizes for stories, I am going to look at the drawings that they have sent up. There are a great many, some very good and some—well—not *very* good. The best is sent in by DOLLIE PHILLIPS, White Knights, Walm Lane, N.W., who wins the prize of 2s. 6d.

I am sure you will all admire that big lion coming towards us. He looks so strong. He makes us think of the great desert. Dollie says, "I have not learnt to shade yet, so I don't expect my first attempt will be very grand."

I think it is very good.

The next best drawing, which I wish I could print, is by GLADYS HAYNES. It represents the head of our Saviour crowned with thorns, and it is very carefully and cleverly done. I award to it an Hon. Mention and a Diploma.

A very delicate and intricate little drawing of nasturtiums has been sent up by HELENA R. MOORE (aged 13), Beaufort School, Bristol. It shows that Helena has observed very nicely, the way in which the blossom of the nasturtium grows out of the stalk. Another drawing is by WINIFRED MARY HARMAN (11), "Achnacone," Bergholt Road, Colchester, of leaves done from nature. I have only one fault to find in that spray of foliage, and that is that Winifred makes the veinage of the ivy leaves as dark as the outline. Some jessamine, signed W. M., also deserves to be mentioned. To these three Diplomas of Merit are also awarded. I want all my children whenever they send up anything for competition to put their name and their age on the back or on the left-hand corner, as sometimes their letters get all mixed up, and then, oh dear! it is so difficult to fit the letters, and the drawings, and the stories together.

J. DUMARESQ'S pansies "for thought" is very good. I hope that she will go on working hard at her drawing.

Head of "Wildrak" is very boldly and squarely touched in. There is plenty of character in "Wildrak."

WINIFRED HILDA DRAYTON (13), figure of Wind, a girl standing on the sea-shore holding her hat, with the wind blowing her skirts and the sea-gulls flying about her, has a great deal of movement and "go."

GWENDOLINE EDWARDS (aged 12), "Hillcrest," Londonderry, Nova Scotia, Canada, sends the picture of a lady in a rich old-fashioned dress, to which I award an Hon. Mention and Diploma.

ELSIE M. POTTER'S "Japanese Tea-House Girl," VIOLET W. KEMP'S "A Canadian," both show promise of better things to come.

There are a number of other drawings, but I think, with the exception of MARY ALLWORK'S funny cat holding a piece of music in his paw, they are not yet good enough to be mentioned.

Coloured Prints.

I have selected three prints coloured by my children as the best. I am a little disappointed with the result of this competition: the colour was, as a rule, not laid on very neatly, but made jagged edges that spoilt the appearance of the little picture. The best, to which I award the prize of 2s. 6d., because it is neat and at the same time deep in colour, is sent in by FRANCES HOWARD (12), 31, Queen Anne Street, Cavendish Square. The picture represents Goody Two Shoes leaving her old home hand in hand with her brother, after the death of their parents. The neatest coloured print is the work of MARGARET SEMPLE FINLAYSON (12), "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?" The colouring, however, is not so rich as that of the prize winner. The hat of the boy, the pail carried by the little maid, the paling of the gate, and other details of the pictures, are either not coloured at all, or so faintly tinged that it is very difficult to know if they have received a wash of colour.

The same criticism may be applied to WINIFRED HARMAN'S colouring of "Gone to School." It is good but not finished enough.

I cannot answer my dear little people's letters to-day, for my space has come to an end. I have a nice letter from DOROTHY SECHTART, who tells me about her donkey, and a great fire that broke out at Yarmouth when she was there last summer. How I wish I could print SOLLINA M. MORRE'S letter with the account of her dog, Vicky Baine; HELEN G. CLIVE'S canaries are very amusing; DOLLIE PHILLIPS' and BOB'S letters are both delightful, and so are many others.

SOUTHERN CROSS, and three other children and girls, who live in Christchurch, New Zealand, ask me to have a puzzle page for Colonial girls and children. She has answered correctly the meaning of the mysterious inscription on the old door. I and all my children will be delighted to hear from Southern Cross and her friends.

I hope to publish the second prize story next time.

A Merry Christmas to you all, dear little people, from your friend,

THE EDITOR.

Fashions for Girls.

By MRS. MARY WHITLEY.

Illustrated by designs specially drawn for The Girl's Realm *by* Elsa Hahn.

Christmas is still some weeks away, with its family gatherings and its gay festivities, but our thoughts are already turning towards the time when dainty evening blouses will be a necessity, and when also, if only the weather will consent to be seasonable, suggestions for a skating costume will not come amiss. Many pretty materials suitable for evening blouses may be obtained this season, in the way of soft silks, which are already finely tucked, and which can be bought by the yard quite reasonably. Then there are embroidered nets, and other nets with stripes of lace insertion which can be bought in the same way, and which make up very prettily, into those dainty, transparent slips, which can be worn over silk or batiste linings, cut high or low as occasion requires. A low or square-cut bodice lining, worn under a net and lace transparent slip has a very pretty effect, when the slip is made quite high to the throat, and finished with a lace collar-band.

The pretty evening blouses whose portraits adorn this page will be studied, I know, with great interest by my readers, as I have received many enquiries lately for designs of this description. The first blouse sketched is carried out in tucked white glacé silk, with wide insertions of écru guipure, and is made with a slightly full effect, drooping over the waist-belt in front, in the fashion which is now so much in vogue. The upper part of the bodice consists entirely of transparent lace, and there are bands of black velvet ribbon at the throat and again at the waist. For an older girl who has been promoted to the dignity of colours, this blouse would be pretty in pale shades of pink, blue or green, with ivory-white Irish crochet lace.

A DESIGN FOR A SKATING GOWN IN ZIBELINE CLOTH.

TWO DAINTY EVENING BLOUSES FOR GIRLS

Our second blouse is of the more picturesque kind, and is intended for the girl whose leanings, in the matter of dress, are rather towards the artistic than the fashionable. That pretty fichu, draped lightly round the shoulders, should be made in *mousseline de soie* or chiffon, edged with frills of the same material, while the strap across the front, can be either of black velvet, or of ivory-white satin ribbon, fastened with small rosette bows on each side. The blouse itself is of soft white silk, with wide tucks connected by hair-pin stitching.

For girls who require something a little more useful in the way of blouses for home evening wear, there are many pretty printed floral silks and delaines, with other fabrics in a mixture of silk and wool, patterns of which can be obtained from Peter Robinson's Oxford Street establishment. A blouse in one of these silk and wool mixtures, in pale colorings, prettily tucked and gathered, needs nothing in the way of trimming beyond one of those detachable sailor collars in écru lace, which can also be procured at Peter Robinson's in Oxford Street. Glacé silk is another very desirable fabric for evening blouses, but in getting it you must be sure to buy a fairly good quality, otherwise the silk will split and crack to pieces after you have worn your blouse about a week.

And now to consider our skating gown, which, as I need scarcely point out, might be adapted equally well for a winter walking dress for those who do not skate. It is made in one of those new zibeline cloths, with a long-haired surface, which will be very much worn this winter, and which can be obtained now in a great many colours, as well as in black and white. The coat is cut very smartly, with basques of the newest shape, and finished at the sides with a trimming of white cloth stitched with black. As far as colour goes, a dark shade

of green would look well, and would afford a pleasant contrast with the snowy white of the ermine collar and revers, and the white cloth which borders the hem of the skirt, but which in the case of a walking-gown should be done away with altogether, as it would get so quickly soiled. Plain dark green cloth might easily be substituted, and would look very well in combination with the rough green zibeline. The toque should have a crown of green velvet and an ermine brim, with a knot of dark violets on one side. The ermine muff gives a pretty finishing touch to the costume as a whole.

There is one point which I am very anxious to impress upon my readers of every age, when they are making their choice of winter gowns and hats. A perfect harmony of colour and style should always be your first object, if you have any ambition to dress really well. Do not have a spot of green here and a dash of crimson there, with black and brown somewhere else in your costume; and, above and beyond all, do not jumble summer and winter things together. A lace-trimmed muslin blouse and a fur boa are better apart. You should never forget that the secret of dressing well does not lie in buying expensive and gorgeous things, but in selecting always the gown that is suitable to the occasion on which it will be worn.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

AUTUMN.—I think you are rather young to go out much "into society," as you express it, for most girls of the present day at your age are only just beginning the more serious part of their education. In the matter of your best dress, I should advise you to send for sketches of young girls' dresses to Messrs. D. H. Evans, 318, etc., Oxford Street, W., addressing your letter to the juvenile costume department. You will find that they have a good selection of dresses for girls, at prices that are remarkably moderate. If you mention THE GIRL'S REALM in your letter to Messrs. D. H. Evans, you will receive the fashion sketches by return of post. For your hat you should send to Messrs. Woodrow, 46, Piccadilly, W. They have some wonderfully pretty Tam-o'-Shanter toques, which you cannot fail to like, at 12s. 6d. each in all colours, trimmed with bent quills and soft rosette bows of silk. As far as colours are concerned, the shades that will suit you best for the winter will be dark brown or dark green. Both these colours will be very much worn during the winter season.

LUTZ.—I wish so much that you had sent me your name and address, as I could then have answered you privately, and I am afraid now you will have to wait some time, until you can see this answer in print. I quite agree with you as to the difficulty of choosing a simple and pretty fancy dress which can afterwards be utilised, either for day or evening wear, especially when you do not want to spend very much upon it. I think that the best thing you can do is to get a copy of a book called "Fancy Dresses Described," from Debenham and Freebody, Wigmore Street, W. I am not quite sure what it costs, but nothing very extravagant, and if you send them a post-card of enquiry, mentioning THE GIRL'S REALM, they will let you know immediately how much the book will cost to send to you, post free. A flower dress is always one of the most effective for a young girl and one which can be most easily altered afterwards into an evening frock. Artificial flowers are not often worn in the evening by young girls nowadays, unless they are quite small blossoms, such as Banksia roses or white violets. With a white satin gown I advise you to wear white satin shoes, from the London Shoe Company, 123, Queen Victoria Street, E.C., and white suéde gloves, from the London Glove Company, 45A Cheapside, E.C. To get an idea of their prices, you might write first to both places for illustrated catalogues. With your black cloth coat, a black skirt to match would look best of all, but if you do not like this idea, you might choose a blue that would harmonise with your flannel blouse. For suitable materials for your skirt, I advise you to write for patterns to Messrs. D. H. Evans and Co., 318, etc., Oxford Street, W. As to the style, a skirt with three flat flounces near the hem, each flounce about three inches wide and cut on the cross, would be most likely to suit you. If you will let me have your address I will send you some sketches of pretty skirts, in the hope that they may even then be of some use to you.

Mrs. H. U.—As you did not choose a name by which you might identify your answer, I am using your initials, and I hope you will recognise this reply, as being meant for you. If you had given me your address, I would have answered you privately, long since. I believe that you can get the paper pattern you require from Madame Myra, 10, and 11, Fetter Lane, E.C., but I cannot tell you what it will cost.

TRUNK MAD.—You can get excellent trunks and travelling boxes of all kinds from Messrs. Robinson and Cleaver, 170, Regent Street, W., and I advise you to write to them for an illustrated catalogue.

A FASHION COMPETITION.

The Editor is offering a Prize of 10/6 for the most artistically designed and daintily made white or cream coloured fichu, the materials of which do not exceed ten shillings in cost. The materials may cost less than that, but they must not cost more; and in awarding the Prizes, novelty of idea and neatness of workmanship will be taken more into consideration than costliness of material. Muslin, chiffon, or point d'esprit net, with trimmings of lace are suggested as suitable fabrics for these fichus. Competitors who wish to have their fichus returned, can make sure that this will be done, by sending with their work a request to this effect, and a stamped and addressed wrapper or box for its return. Each competitor must sew securely to her fichu a small piece of paper or a card, with her name and address on it, otherwise her work will be disqualified. Fichus must be addressed "Fashion," THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk Street, London, W.C and reach the office not later than December 15th, 1901

BY THE EDITOR.

"ON THE FRIENDSHIP OF GIRLS."

My Dear Girls.—The other day, I was sitting by the fire, thinking of Emerson's ideal of friendship, as expressed in his essay. On the table by my side were your letters in which so many of you told me your ideals of friendship. The twilight of chill October was closing in, and the fire was lit.

I think that the first fires kindled on autumn evenings have a special social charm. The flames in low fires have an unforeseen way of flickering up here and there—now a yellow one, now an orange one, now a blue one—that suggest that a responsive little elf is trying to converse with you in signals. As I was thinking of your eager ideals and of Emerson's lofty one, the door opened and Caroline, Dorothy, and a French girl, Clotilde, who is staying on a visit with the latter, came in to see me.

My visitors would not hear of a lamp being brought in, so we sat in the firelight drinking tea, and presently our talk drifted to friendship. Clotilde, in her pretty broken English, said, after we had discussed Emerson's ideal, that she "had not much sympathy for the great American's thought of friendship; it was too abstract, too cold."

"Bloodless! I call it," broke in Caroline, with her accustomed brevity of speech, and sipping her tea somewhat savagely.

"A leetle bit," agreed Clotilde, when we had expounded to her Caroline's monosyllabic criticism. "It seems to me your Mr. Emerson loves his friend, not for himself at all but because that friend is a virtue. Now, I do not think that the heart beats in that view of a friend. Your great American would look on a friend as he would look on a fine picture or listen to sweet music—it puts him in a beautiful mood. If he finds a crack in it, or that there is a false note, it jars him. He will have no more of it. Now, I would not feel I had a friend if I had a fear this would happen. I would say to myself, one day she will judge me. She will feel I am not good, as she thought me. She will not want me any more. Oh! but that is not at all a comfortable idea of friendship."

"Most uncomfortable," cried Caroline, "especially as some folk have a troublesome little habit of dressing you up, as if you were a doll, with all sorts of virtues that you don't possess—and that you don't pretend to possess . . . and then when they find you've not got them they make a grievance of it and have nothing more to do with you. Imagine a girl making a friend of me because it pleases her to see in me a surpassing gentleness, and when she finds I can say boo-o to a goose, turning me out into the cold. No, give me the friend who takes me as I am, faults and all; that's the friend for me."

"Oh! but that is not what Emerson means," cried Dorothy, indignantly, for Dorothy is one of the girls who asked me to write about Emerson. "He says you love your friend because she makes you feel that goodness is true. Perhaps you love her because she is self-sacrificing. When you feel tempted to be egotistic, you think of her and you love her, because the thought of her helps you to conquer your selfishness."

"And so Emerson tells you, my dears, go near her as little as you can, for, as she is sure to do something selfish some day, you will receive a shock and your ideal will be all shattered. I don't call that friendship—I call it making use of your friends for your own purposes. It is egotism, that's what it is," said Caroline.

"You don't understand Emerson a bit!" cried Dorothy, with blazing eyes. "It's not egotism to want to be a fine human being. If you are so—so silly as to mingle up everybody and to say one is gentle when—when she is—"

"Brutal—out with it, my dear," said Caroline, genially, with an amused gleam in her eyes.

"If you do," continued Emerson's champion, taking no notice of the interruption, "then it's no use writing for you, it is no use trying to make you understand Emerson is quite right: you love your friends because of their qualities."

"Then it's only paragons that are safe. I'm the very contrary of a paragon, so I had better retire from friendship," remarked Caroline.

"Oh," said Clotilde, "you are not to retire, you are to have friends, Miss Caroline. You are very much to have friends—you are so frank. We do not see everybody alike. One does say if you are very frank that you hurt, that you are what you call blunt; and another says it is beautiful—her character—it is the truth she tells always; and of another girl, who is softer and does not like to give pain, one says she does not tell the truth—she is false; and another says, she is good—her heart is tender—she cannot bear to hurt. So we can all have friends; we can all be thought good by our friends, for everybody does not see us alike."

I think what Clotilde said is a great truth. And so my visitors discussed the question of friendship that plays so great a part in girls' lives; and after they left I turned to your letters and I felt I was continuing with you the subject that these girls had been debating so eagerly.

"Rhoda" would never forgive a friend who did as "Rosie" did in the problem sent in by "Linda" some months ago, and the discussion upon which I had to postpone. It might be entitled "Friendship's First Tragedy." "Rosie had not contradicted the charge brought against her that she had said to another girl that her bosom friend Linda was 'gushing' and 'stuck-up.' 'Rhoda' would never forgive 'Rosie'—never." Georgina also thinks that "Rosie" was doubly false, for you ought never even to allow that your friend has a fault.

In these two extreme views lies a misconception of the nature of friendship. One thinks that you cannot be true to a friend without being the champion of all her faults, and another thinks that you cannot be true to yourself without instantly breaking off a friendship the moment a fault is discovered. But surely you may be in a certain generous way both the censor of the faults of your friends and at the same time the truest helper in all the troubles into which the faults lead them. You may blame a friend for faults, that is to say for her faults, if you take care to confine your confidences on the subject to herself and not to blame her behind her back; and at the same time you may feel the most intense compassion for her misdoings. After all, what is all fault but a sort of aberration of mind or spirit? You go wrong in this or that because for a while the worse self rather than the better has got possession of you. Your true friend sees it, knows it, and helps you to right yourself. As for the fault of repelling her and leading to a breach of friendship, that never enters her mind. She is true to you, loyal to you; she does not defend your fault in the sense of saying it is no fault at all, but she helps you to get the better of it by restoring your nature to its proper balance by gentleness and courage. Pity and helpfulness are really the true notes of this noble and generous relationship. If you love your friend you will feel most tenderness for her when the world is most severe—and perhaps most justly severe—on her faults; but you will certainly not try to make the faults worse by flattering her into the belief that they are virtues.

Some of the difficulties of my girls under this head seem to me, if I may put it so, just a little morbid. Now, for instance, LINDA asked whether she did right or wrong in charging her friend as having spoken of her as "stuck up." This is going a little too much into detail. There is a maxim that the law takes no notice of little things. There ought to be a maxim to the same effect as to friendship. There must be in life a good deal of magnanimity. The great philosophic writer, Aristotle, insisted strongly on that as a part of a noble character, and magnanimity is a certain high-souled contempt of trifles—trifles of all sorts, trifles in the difficulties of life, trifles in human relationships. Suppose my friend does confide to a third party that she thinks I am a bit "stuck up." I should have been better pleased, perhaps, if she had given me the first refusal of the confidence, but I certainly would not think of quarrelling with her for such a trifle. For after all she has not charged me with anything very dreadful. She has not said that I am false or vicious. She has only said I thought too much of myself, and perhaps I do. For all her saying it, she may truly like me as much as ever, and may only feel a little annoyed because I have contrived to out-do her in the admiration that she feels for me.

If we had the Aristotleian magnanimity we would look on this as a trifle light as air, and would be as nice to her, not only in speech but in thought, as though she had never said it. The truth is that half the quarrels of girls are upon these pin-points, because they are sensitive to the slightest puncture, and they demand a whole-heartedness in every feeling of which they are the object which they can never receive, if only for the simple reason that they can never give it.

I hope my friends will take me with all my little faults, for I have dozens of them, and it would be a terrible shock to me to think they believe me faultless and would one day find out that I was very much the reverse. What I want them to feel is simply this: love for me in spite of my faults, and a generous and helpful compassion for the faults as they come, and along with this an equally generous and helpful magnanimity of spirit with regard to the faults that are not worth taking into account. So I should always try to take them, so I hope they will always take me.

This is the Christmas Number, and so I must bid a Happy Christmas to all my dear girls far and near.

Your affectionate Friend,

THE EDITOR.

·ETTIE·
·ARTHUR·R·READ·JUN?
1900.

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE THIRD.

HIAWATHA.

"From the wigwam he departed,
Leading with him Laughing Water,
Hand in hand they went together,
Through the woodland and the meadow."

—*See Editor's note on page* 256.

A Girl's Year at the Mansion House.

By KATHLEEN HAYDN GREEN,

Lady Mayoress 1900—1901.

I HAVE been asked by the Editor of The Girl's Realm to write some notes of my experiences during the past year, so I shall comply by first giving a brief sketch of the ordinary functions that fall to the lot of every Lady Mayoress, and then I will describe in fuller detail some of the functions of special interest in which I personally have taken part.

I believe that everyone is familiar nowadays with the doings of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress on the historic 9th of November; therefore I need not dwell in detail on the gorgeous spectacle afforded by the "Show," or Banquet. Both of these are exhaustively described and portrayed by illustrations in all the journals of the day, and in their essential features vary very little from year to year; but as I am writing for girls who may be interested in dress, I will say a word about the Lady Mayoress and her "Maids of Honour." It is always a very pretty sight to see the little procession of Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress—he in the magnificent black and gold State robes, and she in court dress and train—followed by six, or even eight, young ladies, generally in white frocks. They march down the beautiful old Library of the Guildhall to take their places on the daïs for the reception of their guests.

There is one detail of interest that I must mention in connection with the Banquet; it is that, although the Premier escorts the Lady Mayoress to her seat, he takes his place at the table, not by her side, but on the right of the Lord Mayor, the Lady Mayoress remaining on the left, beside the Lord Chancellor.

As I have said, the Banquet itself varies very little in detail. It has been for many, many years the great event of the civic year, and to have taken a prominent part in it will ever remain a proud memory of my life.

The Lord Mayor begins his official work on the 10th of November, when he takes his seat in the Justice Room at the Mansion House. It is, perhaps, not generally understood that the Chief Magistrate must occupy the Bench and try "cases" six days in every week of his year of office, unless by special business he is called elsewhere, when he must provide a substitute from among his brother Aldermen. The Lady Mayoress has, of course, no duty of that kind to perform, but very soon after the 9th she is busily engaged in arranging the "move" to the City, and in trying to make the great historic mansion look as homelike as possible. The Lord Mayor and his family are usually settled in the Mansion House about the middle of

December, when the necessary repairs and re-decorations (which are undertaken annually by the Corporation) are completed.

The State Apartments of the Mansion House are on the first floor—the Egyptian Hall, the Long Parlour and the Drawing Room; but above this are the private rooms.

Now we will imagine the mayoral circle safely ensconced in their new dwelling, and review very briefly the entertainments they must give during the year. There are a certain number of banquets, fixed by ancient custom, to be held at the Mansion House during each Lord Mayor's term of office. He must entertain his own Ward of the City at a special dinner, also the officers of the Corporation, on the first Monday in January, known as "Plow Monday," because in ancient times the husbandmen returned to the "Plow" (plough) on that particular Monday, at the close of the Christmas festivities.

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MISS KATHLEEN HAYDN GREEN, WITH HER SISTER MISS NORA GREEN.

Miss Nora Green was her sister's constant companion and helper through her year of office.

Then the Lord Mayor, during the same month, must entertain his brother Aldermen and their ladies. This is always looked upon as quite a "family party," when, as one dear lady, the wife of a popular Alderman, is fond of saying, "We are all brothers and sisters."

The "Easter Banquet," which takes place in the Egyptian Hall during the fortnight after Easter Sunday, is one of the largest dinners of the year. To it are invited the Presidents of the Royal Hospitals and the Members of the Diplomatic Corps. The City Companies are entertained at a banquet during the month of May. The Master of each Company and his Lady are always invited—the Mercers' Company taking precedence of all others. To this festivity come the Masters with their badges of office, many of them very quaint and ancient, and some set with precious stones. The City is justly proud of her historic "Guilds" of Freemen, and it is a very ancient custom for the Lord Mayor to entertain the Masters at this Banquet in the Egyptian Hall.

The Judges come to their annual dinner in June, and the Bishops in July. Both of these functions are very representative, as, besides the learned and distinguished gentlemen whose names and offices are included in the title of the banquet, many other guests from legal and ecclesiastical circles are invited, thus rendering the gathering unique. The learned Judges do not come in wig and gown, as they do to the 9th of November banquet at Guildhall, but on all these occasions there is a sufficient sprinkling of uniforms of different kinds which relieve the prosaic and sombre evening dress of the modern gentleman.

The Bankers and Merchants of the City have a banquet to themselves in June, which function the Chancellor of the Exchequer attends as the chief guest of the evening.

During August the Lord Mayor is allowed a holiday, but he must return some time in September in order to be in London on the election day of his successor, whom he entertains at dinner on the 29th of September, after the election at Guildhall.

The Fruiterers' Company during October present the Lord Mayor with a magnificent collection of fruit, and according to old custom the Master and Members of the Company are afterwards entertained at dinner at the Mansion House. This is one of the most interesting functions of the year.

In addition to these various banquets the Lord Mayor gives two balls; one, the Juvenile Ball in January, the other to the Mayors and Provosts of the United Kingdom, in October. The children's ball at the Mansion House is quite the prettiest sight of its kind, and invitations to it are much sought after. There are generally about 1,100 guests, and the "grown-ups" among these enjoy the ball quite as much as the "juveniles." Speaking from experience I can say that this year, I, as a "grown-up," enjoyed looking on at the pretty spectacle quite as much as any of the little dancers could have enjoyed the event.

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THE GIRL LADY MAYORESS IN HER BOUDOIR AT THE MANSION HOUSE.

The ball to the Mayors and Provosts is a very brilliant spectacle. The Mayors are resplendent in their chains of office, and very beautiful some of these chains are, notably that of the Mayor of Chatham, which once adorned the neck of the potent Doge of Venice. It was somehow brought to England, and now is the official ornament of the head of the Borough of Chatham.

Now it must not be supposed that these entertainments at the Mansion House constitute all the gaieties of the year. There are also functions at the Guildhall where the Lord Mayor may play the host. These vary very much, according to public events. Sometimes the Freedom of the City is presented to some notable man of the day, in recognition of services to his country, as during the past year to Sir James Willcocks and Lord Milner of Cape Town. These occasions are always of special interest, being included, as they must always be, in the history of our land.

During the past year a very interesting and unprecedented entertainment was given at Guildhall, when the Mayors of the new London Boroughs were welcomed by the Lord Mayor of London at a conversazione. Two separate evenings were devoted to entertaining the new Corporations that have now sprung up around the old City. It was a tiring task for both my father and myself to receive the representatives of the new Boroughs, and no one would understand how fatiguing so much "shaking-hands"

can be who has not undergone the experience of receiving several hundreds of people. But these gatherings were very interesting, and made a link of good-fellowship between the old Mother Corporation and her new daughters.

Other functions take place at the Guildhall during the year. Prize distributions to volunteer regiments, concerts, and meetings on behalf of charitable institutions. Of these I shall speak later. One very interesting duty which for the last few years has fallen to the lot of the Lord Mayor is to open the Loan Exhibition of Pictures at the Guildhall, which has now become an annual affair. This year, the collection being one of Spanish art, the opening ceremony was graced by the presence of the Spanish Ambassador and his wife, who were much interested to see so many fine examples of the art of their country.

To go further afield I must tell you how the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress attend functions outside their own home. There are enjoyable evenings to be spent in dining with the City Companies in their ancient and historic halls. The Lord Mayor dines with all the Companies during his year of office, and as many of them give "Ladies' Nights," it has also been my privilege to dine at some of these old halls, or to attend the very delightful balls that are given, for instance, by the Merchant Taylors', the Skinners' and the Saddlers' Companies.

AN AUTOGRAPH PORTRAIT PRESENTED TO THE GIRL LADY MAYORESS BY THE GERMAN EMPEROR ON THE OCCASION OF HIS VISIT TO ENGLAND FOR QUEEN VICTORIA'S FUNERAL.

"*In remembrance of the passing away of beloved Grandmamma.*"

So far I have only spoken of the purely pleasant functions; but there is another aspect of the year at the Mansion House. The City is always an active centre of charitable work, and the Lord Mayor, as its head, is expected to support with his patronage all the leading philanthropic societies and guilds of the day, whether it be to open a Sale of Work on behalf of some needy parish, or to preside in the Egyptian Hall (lent by his permission for the occasion) at a meeting in support of some well-known philanthropic institution. The Lord Mayor is invited constantly to open clubs and free libraries, or a new wing of some overcrowded hospital. On these occasions the presence of the Lady Mayoress is invariably desired. The Lady Mayoress is also frequently called upon to go in solitary grandeur to open bazaars and sales, which to any one unaccustomed to such duties is at first rather an ordeal, but a short speech is all that is usually required.

I think that I have said enough about the customary duties and pleasures of the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress during their year of office. I will now speak from the more personal point of view, and describe one or two of the functions of the past year that roused my special interest. As must be well known to my readers, the chief event of the past year—although a very sad one—has been the death of our lamented Queen Victoria. On the "Demise of the Crown" (to use what I

believe is the correct phraseology) the Lord Mayor takes a leading part in the affairs of state until the Proclamation of the new Sovereign. The death of the Queen was notified to the Lord Mayor by a special telegram from Osborne, and was at once announced to the thousands assembled outside the Mansion House. It was then the Chief Magistrate's duty to ask the Dean of St. Paul's to order the great bell of the Cathedral to be tolled. Some of us went up to St. Paul's Churchyard to hear the mournful sound, which was listened to in respectful silence by an awe-stricken crowd.

We have had during this year two very interesting functions, the Proclamation of the King's Accession and Coronation. From the balcony of the Mansion House we could see the processions, and even hear a little of what was said on the steps of the Royal Exchange. The Heralds and Pursuivants rode to the Exchange in carriages, but they walked back to the Mansion House, and they could then be seen to better advantage. It was a most picturesque and ever-memorable function.

The state visit that the Lord Mayor and the Civic Party paid to Glasgow was perhaps the next most important event of our year. I do not think, however, that I can record any detail of special note in connection with it.

We also visited Winchester for the celebration of King Alfred's Millenary, and witnessed the unveiling of the great bronze statue of the Saxon Monarch. This ceremonial has been so recently described in the papers that I do not think I can say more about it than my readers already know.

It has been my privilege during the past year to attend many very interesting literary and artistic functions. I have had the honour of dining, I believe, with the leading Literary Societies of London. Of these, one of the most enjoyable to me was the "Woman Writers' Dinner."

It was also my pleasure to attend the luncheon given to Madame Sarah Bernhardt at the Hotel Cecil by the Vagabonds' Club. It was a most delightful and successful function, and at the close of it I had the privilege of a short chat with the great French actress. Madame Bernhardt came to lunch with us at

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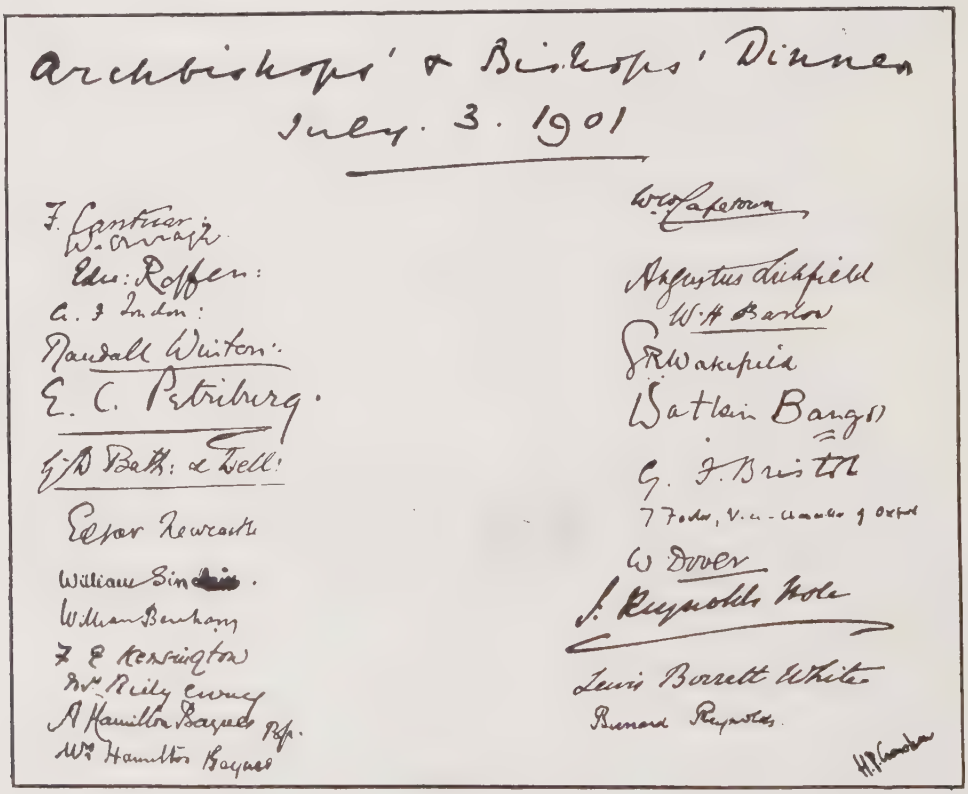
A CORNER OF THE LADY MAYORESS'S OWN SPECIAL ROOM IN THE MANSION HOUSE.

the Mansion House on the occasion of the concert in aid of the Queen Victoria Memorial Fund, when she recited two charming French poems. It is, no doubt, one of the great joys of their year of office that the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress are privileged to meet most, if not all, of the distinguished men and women of the day.

To return once more to the philanthropic side of the year's work, I should like to refer to one function I attended which made a lasting impression on my memory—I refer to the "Crippled Children's Dinner" at the Great Assembly Hall in the Mile End Road. I have found a great deal of pleasure this year in attending any function that has been associated with children; it is a memory of pleasure mingled with pain to recall that evening, when over six hundred crippled children from the Whitechapel slums were brought to the Hall to be amused and fed.

I must conclude by briefly alluding to what may be called the "Museum" of trophies of the year. The Lady Mayoress has it in her power to make during the twelve months a most interesting collection of programmes, cards and photographs bearing on the functions she has attended. She is also the fortunate recipient of many gifts, especially of bouquets, though these, alas! do not remain for ever; and if she is interested in autographs, a very unique album may be obtained, filled with the signatures of the distinguished people who visit the Mansion House. A page out of mine is here reproduced.



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A PAGE FROM THE AUTOGRAPH BOOK OF THE LADY MAYORESS.

Among the photographs that I have had given to me, the most interesting is that of the German Emperor reproduced here.

The Editor has had taken for this article a special photograph of myself and my sister, who has been my constant companion and helper throughout the year.

A CAUTIOUS MOTHER.

AUNT BETTY. "May, darling, will you go into the dining-room for my work?"

MAY. "Well, I would, Auntie dear, but you see I am chap-eron-ing Dolly, and it would not be quite the thing to leave her alone in the room with Mr. Golliwog."

Daisy's Fairy Godmother.

A STORY FOUNDED ON TRUTH.

By Mrs. C. N. WILLIAMSON.

Illustrated by W. H. Margetson.

AS Daisy Allen read her lover's letter for the third time, hot tears rose in her eyes, and glittered on the long lashes. The words upon the paper swam into indistinctness, though their terrible meaning knocked at her heart. A giddiness came upon her, and she flung out one little hand to steady herself against the rough bark of the apple-tree under whose bower of pink blossom she was standing. The orchard, the green uplands beyond, seemed to disappear; the trilling of the lark in the meadow no longer sounded for her; it was as if nature had faded to leave her alone with her great sorrow.

Suddenly she took a great resolve—one that made her half frightened of herself, while her heart bounded, and the blood rushed back to her cheeks. The moment of drooping faintness was past. She ran quickly to the low white house. In the stillness of the soft spring morning there was no sound save the swish-swish of old Barbara's churn in the dairy, and the droning of bees among the mignonette of the window-boxes. Daisy knew that her stern-faced guardian, old Ralph Dersingham, had driven his steady grey mare away to Tonbridge market, and that he would not be back until time for the frugal supper at eight. So there was no one to hinder her from carrying out her plan.

She ran lightly up to her little white bedroom under the eaves, where the swifts built and chattered, and quickly made into a small bundle things for the night—a simple dress and a few girlish treasures she had not the heart to leave behind. Then, stealing down again, she went out by the front door, glided along the formal avenue of dwarf yews that led to the outer gate which opened on a little-used bye-road, and walked rapidly away. She knew, though she had never yet travelled by it, that the wonderful new railway had recently been opened between Tunbridge Wells and London; the railway which carried people about the country at a speed of twenty miles an hour, and was rapidly driving the old stage-coaches off the road. So she hastened along the country lanes and down the long hill that leads to "the Wells"; found her way to a new station that stood on the edge of a long, shining track of metals, and took her place in a line with other people slowly moving forward to buy their tickets at a little window.

"Third class London—twelve shillings," said the sharp-voiced clerk when Daisy's turn came; and her heart seemed to stop its beating.

"Twelve shillings!" she exclaimed. "Why, I have not so much with me. I didn't know—I—the coach—"

"Nothing to do with coaches here," said the

fellow, rudely, "Move on, please"; and Daisy, with a vivid flush over face and neck, found herself elbowed away by the people pressing after her, all eager to take tickets for the wonderful trains. With tears that stung her eyelids, though she bravely tried to keep them back, she moved out into the streets, crossed to the Common, and mechanically followed a branch road that wound upwards. She walked on upon the strip of grass that bordered the way, with some half-formed, desperate intention of getting to London on foot; then, as her own weakness and the impossibility of this forced themselves upon her, so utter seemed her helplessness, so deep her despair, that she flung herself face downward upon the greensward, and began sobbing her very heart out.

As so she lay, lost to all save her own misery, a cloud of grey dust veiled the road that went ribboning down towards "the Wells." It floated nearer, to presently disclose an elegant carriage and four, with harness shining with gold, the outriders' liveries of scarlet.

Within sat a lady and gentleman, talking earnestly together. The lady was small and young, with large eyes, and an air of high command, withal that she looked so good and kindly. She was plainly dressed, with a large round hat that shaded her face from the sun. The gentleman on her left was handsome and intellectual-looking, with long hair, somewhat large whiskers, and a coloured waistcoat. He was looking into the lady's eyes and smiling appreciation of something she had just said, when her glance swept past him and espied the prone, graceful figure of the young girl upon the roadside. With a sudden touch upon the arm she drew the gentleman's attention; he gave an order; the carriage came to a halt.

Leaning upon the gentleman's arm, the lady alighted, and crossed the dusty road; and so the two stood upon the soft grass unheard by Daisy, whose shoulders were still shaking with the hopeless sobs against which she scarcely struggled. The lady stooped, and laid a small, white-gloved hand on the girl's shoulder.

"What is the matter, my dear?" asked a vibrating, musical voice that seemed to carry in its accents balm for hurt minds.

Daisy, who had lain absorbed in the fascination of her grief, looked up in confusion and surprise to see this courtly lady and gentleman bending over her. Even her unworldly eyes could see that they were personages of some importance, yet there was such a winning graciousness of sympathy in the lady's smile, that the girl's self-consciousness was banished. She rose to her feet, with the tears hanging on her long lashes. The lady and gentleman exchanged a quick glance when the wild-rose beauty of the girl's face was disclosed to them.

"You are in trouble, dear?" said the lady, and there was such a comforting inflection in the sweet voice that Daisy found herself answering quite simply.

"I am indeed in trouble," she said; "for I must get to London. I haven't money enough to pay my railway-ticket, and the coaches no longer run upon this road."

"And is it very urgent that you should go to London?" asked the lady.

"Oh, indeed it is!" cried the girl, pushing back from her flushing cheeks the stray curls disordered by her grief. "It is life or death for me, or rather for one I love—which you know is the same thing—and to-morrow it may be too late."

The girl's soft eyes dropped at this, as if she had spoken too impulsively, and the lady and gentleman exchanged another quick glance of understanding.

"You are going to friends in London?" asked the lady gently.

"I hoped—I trusted—that there were some friends—acquaintances—who would take me in——"

"Then you shall come to London with me," said the lady, with a smile.

"You would really take me to London, Madam?" exclaimed Daisy, clasping her hands. She could not but trust the kind smile, and in her desperate case this was too marvellous a chance to squander.

"If indeed you are bent on going there, and can assure me that I may leave you with trusty friends among whom you will be safe."

"Oh, indeed, I can assure you so, and thank you a thousand, thousand times."

In another moment an obsequious servant

had lifted Daisy's bundle from the sward where she had let it fall; the gentleman with the sympathetic brown eyes helped the fairy-like little lady to mount into the carriage, next offering his hand to Daisy and getting in himself last of all. The whip cracked, the four horses bounded forward, and feeling as though she were living in a dream or a story, Daisy sat on silken cushions and was whirled towards London in the company of her protectors.

For a time they plied her with no direct questions, contenting themselves with the *naïve* answers she gave to their comments on the landscape; but presently, when Daisy had given forth some girlish opinions of a romantic character, the gentleman remarked, with a friendly and indulgent smile, that she seemed to have gleaned her views of life through converse with a poet.

"So I have, sir," she admitted, with a lovely blush. "The man I love, and even yet may marry, if I reach London in time to avert a sad misfortune."

She was in the mood for confidences at last, and they came rippling forth in response to an occasional tactful question.

She had been born in Tunbridge Wells, and had never been to London, nor indeed to any town larger than Brighton. Her father, her mother, were but faint childish memories, and almost as long as she remembered anything, she had been the ward of old Ralph Dersingham, a rich gentleman farmer. He had engaged a governess for her, who had once been in a noble family, and who knew everything in the world that a lady should know. They had read together Scott and Byron and many other great writers; but a year ago the dear governess had died, and when the girl was at her saddest a wonderful thing had come into her life. At this she faltered, and had to be spurred on a little by questionings from her companions.

"Oh, but I meant," she stammered, "that then my guardian's nephew, Harold, came down for a week, having been sent for by his uncle who wished to question him concerning strange rumours he had heard. Harold was to be my guardian's heir, and it was intended that he should take a junior partnership in a well-known firm of stockbrokers. But poor Harold detested the City, it appeared, and spent his time, so Mr. Dersingham had learned, with actors and playwrights in literary clubs. So Mr. Dersingham was determined to find out the whole truth of the matter from Harold himself—for he was of a Puritanical stock and mistrusted all connected with the theatre and the arts.

"So Harold came," said Daisy. "I had never seen him before, and then everything was different. We walked together in the rose-garden; and when Mr. Dersingham was not there he read me poetry he had written, and a play of his that brought the tears to my eyes and set my heart beating fast. I could not wonder that he did not care for the Stock Exchange, and my whole heart was with him in his hopes and fears.

"Before the week was over he had asked me to marry him, if all should be well, and I had given him my promise. Everything was to depend on this very play—a comedy—which a manager had promised to produce at the Haymarket Theatre. Should it be a success, Harold felt his future was secured, and had determined to give up the Stock Exchange. We could be married even though my guardian did not approve (he looked higher for a wife for Harold), and there would be riches for him and happiness for us both. But if the play failed, then Mr. Dersingham would never forgive him for having written it—there would be no future for us—no hope of any kind."

Daisy's hands were clasped; she was leaning forward in the carriage, pouring out to her two silent listeners all the hopes and sorrows of her loving little heart. The great eyes were like two wells of light, and across her face one expression succeeded another like the changes on a landscape as clouds sail over it. Her two hearers were very grave.

"When Harold went away letters came. The play was to be produced even sooner than he had thought, the one which the manager had but lately brought out having proved a failure. Oh, I could hardly wait for the next news of what had happened! Only this morning a little boy who had been paid by Harold to help us in secret, went to the post-office and brought me back a letter. My heart beat so

"THE CARRIAGE MEANWHILE HAD ROLLED QUICKLY ON ITS WAY. . . . . THE INHABITANTS RUSHED TO THEIR DOORS TO CHEER AT SIGHT OF THE FLASHING EQUIPAGE."—(*p* 226.)

that I could scarcely open it; but when I did, oh, Madam, you cannot guess what I read!"

"I am afraid I can," murmured the lady, and there was a mischievous brightness about her eyes. The gentleman shook his head forebodingly.

But Daisy hardly heard or noticed. "There were but a few words," she said, breaking down now, and sobbing. "They are here. Will you care to read them?"

From the fichu that crossed her breast she drew a folded letter in an envelope, the seal broken, like her cherished hopes.

The lady's beautifully shaped hand shook a little as she took the paper from the girl's fingers, and, the gentleman leaning towards her, they read it together.

"My Lost Love," ran the lines, "my play is a failure. The public have utterly failed to understand the novelty of my treatment, and because the comedy does not run on the old conventional lines to which they are accustomed, they laughed—the brutes, they laughed! when they should have wept. The critics are almost to a man against me. Old Bludyer of the 'Thunderer,' the most powerful of them all, has written a critique that slaughters me and my work. The manager is furious at two successive failures, and says he would withdraw the play immediately if only he had something ready with which to follow it. Yet in spite of all, I feel that I am right, that I have done well, and that an enlightened public would have welcomed it as a relief from the stale, conventional plays that flood the stage. But I suppose I am before my time. I am ruined, and shall not live to know that I lost you and all that might have made life dear. Think no more of your despairing HAROLD."

"And what do you fancy he means to do?" asked the lady, very gently, as she gravely handed back the letter.

"I fear he means to end his life when the manager withdraws his play," sobbed Daisy. "But he loves me; and if I can find him, I can win him from such thoughts, and perhaps we may be happy after all."

"You have left your home, have run away from your guardian, in this hope?" reflectively asked her companion.

"Yes, Madam. If there is no better fortune for us, it would be sweeter to die together than apart."

"There must be no dying," exclaimed the lady, smiling radiantly on Daisy. "Your story is a romance, and should have a joyful ending. Trust me, and it shall have one yet." The lady turned and looked into her husband's eyes. He seemed to understand, for he, too, smiled and nodded with a glance of comprehension. Then they both looked again at Daisy, and there was a light in their faces, an air of command about their presence, which lit again the failing flame of courage in the young girl's heart.

"No questions!" cried the lady, when Daisy would have opened her lips with one. "We will play a game, you and I; and in it I shall be your fairy-godmother."

Gracious as the beautiful stranger was, there was that in her manner which exacted obedience, and Daisy's mouth was closed.

The carriage meanwhile had rolled quickly on its way through the beautiful Kentish country towards London. Through long, leafy roads; up and down steep winding hills; through the clean, smiling village of Sevenoaks (where, to Daisy's surprise, the inhabitants rushed to their doors to cheer at sight of the flashing equipage); on to Farnborough and through rustic Bromley the hoofs clattered their merry music. The birds sang, fleecy clouds floated overhead in a sea of blue, and Daisy's nerves thrilled with a sense of the romantic, the unexpected. It was like a page from a fairy story, her meeting with this lady and gentleman, who in their goodness, their high serenity of manner, and their cheering sympathy, seemed like beings of another sphere. Daisy had relapsed into a half-awed silence after the burst of confidence that was wrung from her by her need to confide her troubles to some one who would listen with sympathy; and she sat back timidly in her seat, glancing now at the passing landscape, and then at the animated faces of her new friends, who kept up a lively flow of conversation on art and music, on science and on books, and on many other high matters greater and more wonderful even than the themes of which Daisy's dear old governess had been wont to talk.

"HAROLD WAS PRESENTED TO THE QUEEN, TO THE PRINCE CONSORT, BY THE SMILING MANAGER."—(*p.* 229.)

Now they had reached the somewhat sordid southern fringe of London, and Daisy was amazed at the miles of streets, at the swarming thousands that passed them. As the glittering carriage, with its postillions in red liveries, clattered through the streets, a thrill of emotion ran through the crowds. Vehicles drew aside to let it pass; heads were bared, cheers were raised, children and young people ran after the carriage; and on the face of the beautiful lady who had vowed she would be Daisy's godmother, there came a flush of pleasure, and she bowed graciously to right and left, with a singular, dignified movement of her graceful body, at the plaudits of the crowd, while the gentleman by her side continually raised his hat from his head. Daisy wondered much at this, and her confusion grew as she realised that she had by chance fallen into the company of some great lord and lady, beloved of the common people.

So, amid a running fire of cheering, the carriage came at last to a wide bridge over a great river, with a palace towering on the farther side, and beyond was a great white house, with a large courtyard before it, into which the carriage swept, while soldiers in red coats all lifted their guns together at a word of command from an officer who carried in his hand a flashing sword.

A grave man in black came to the carriage door, and to him, as she alighted, Daisy's godmother murmured some words the girl could not hear. Then he turned to Daisy, bidding her follow him, and her godmother looked after her with a bright smile.

Surely she was in a fairy story now! There was a little room overlooking a lovely garden, and a dignified woman of middle age, bringing on her arm a gown of such richness as the girl had never seen. Yet it was for her to put on, and when she hesitated, she was told that it was the command of—her godmother.

Afterwards there was dinner in another room, still with the dignified woman, and no godmother to be seen. Daisy was all impatience now. She had been told to trust, and she had trusted and obeyed; but she was wild to find her lover, and cried out with thankfulness on hearing at last that she was to be taken to him. Through crowded, bewildering streets she was hurried in a grand coach, like Cinderella, with the lady by her side.

"Are you sure this is the right place?" she timidly asked, as they drew up at a great, brilliantly lighted portico; for she had given the modest address of her lover's lodging, and could not think that this great, glorious building could be the house.

"Yes; I am sure," said the lady, obscurely smiling.

They went in, passing upstairs through a wide corridor and into a curiously-shaped room with a low parapet on one side, shaped like a window. Below, music played, and Daisy looked down over a horse-shoe shaped space, set with many seats in rows, one behind another.

"Why, this must be—a theatre!" the girl exclaimed, excitedly.

"It is the Haymarket Theatre," said her companion.

Daisy's face flushed, and then grew pale.

"But," she faltered, "there are hardly any people here."

"Wait," said the lady. "I was told to remind you that you must trust your fairy godmother."

Daisy was silent. She drew a quick breath as a great curtain was rolled up, displaying a stage with actors, who began speaking lines of Harold's comedy which he had read to her by stealth, under the pink apple-blossoms of the orchard on the Kentish uplands.

The theatre was almost empty. A few men in the stalls were talking and tittering among themselves. The girl could have killed them; when a stout, ostentatious-looking man with a bald head (who had just come in and taken up a prominent position in the middle of the stalls) turned upon the interrupters with so fierce a "Hush," that they were quelled into an astonished silence; and at the end of the next speech by one of the actors, he broke out into loud clapping of the hands, which was half-heartedly taken up in other parts of the house.

Daisy's gratitude went out to this enthusiastic admirer of Harold's work, and she would have liked to shake by the hand the stout, bald-headed man.

"That is Mr. Bludyer, the critic of the 'Thunderer,'" whispered her companion.

"Mr. Bludyer!" gasped Daisy, a strange feeling of unreality sweeping over her as she remembered how in his letter, received this morning, Harold had described this man as his most bitter persecutor. "I do not understand ——" The sentence died on her lips, for though her eyes were claimed by the stage, and she was following with the deepest interest the words of her lover's characters, she could not fail to be conscious of a stir and movement in the theatre itself. Empty seats were quickly filling up; the curtains were drawn from the boxes opposite her own, revealing women in sparkling diamonds; there was a flutter of anticipation in the house. Even the untrained eyes of the young girl told her that this was a crowded and a brilliant audience. At the end of the first act there was loud applause, and Daisy's eyes filled with tears of joy and excitement.

She leaned back in her chair scarcely able to control her excitement. Suddenly everyone in that great assembly seemed to be looking up at her. A wild thought flashed through her mind; "They know that I am here—Harold's sweetheart." Then everyone was standing; the orchestra struck up "God save the Queen;" there was a movement in the box behind her; she glanced round to see that her fairy-godmother had entered, radiant in a beautiful evening dress, a tiara of diamonds flashing in her hair, a great rope of enormous pearls gleaming on her white throat. Half unconsciously Daisy rose too, as her fairy-godmother swept past her, showed herself to the crowded house and bowed right and left, as an admiring murmur, "the Queen, the Queen," came from many lips.

Daisy was struck dumb. The Queen was smiling at her now, as she took her seat in a gilded chair, the handsome gentleman of the morning sitting by her.

"I let it be known," whispered the Queen, leaning towards Daisy, "that I should be here to-night, and I sent word to a few friends also, that they ought to come—to see a good play."

It was the Queen! Daisy's head buzzed with the thought, and she sat half dazed, her ears tingling as she recalled the confidences she had given to her Sovereign in the carriage.

The curtain went up again on the second act before Daisy had found her voice. The Royal pair applauded frequently; and once the Queen said, so that all the house might hear, "Admirable; excellent." The curtain fell to loud sounds of approval, and then the Queen spoke in a low tone to one of the gentlemen in attendance, who left the box, returning quickly with one at sight of whom Daisy started up with a soft cry—"Harold!"

He was presented to the Queen, to the Prince Consort, by the smiling manager of the theatre, and as the curtain was down and only the music playing, the whole house was at liberty to see. As the curtain rose for the last act, the Queen signified that Harold was to remain, and so he stood by Daisy's chair, looking modest and handsome, with the light of love and triumph in his dark eyes. At the end of all, the curtain fell to a great demonstration of pleasure; and at the loud shouts of "Author, author!" the Queen herself stood in the front of the box by the hesitating young man, and there was a great roar of enthusiasm.

"Your play is excellent, Mr. Dersingham," said the Queen; "and as for your sweetheart, she is incomparable. Such a wedding as we shall give her; and it shall be in all the papers that she marries a successful playwright with fame and fortune made." She turned to Daisy. "What do you say, god-daughter? Are you glad or sorry that you had not money enough to pay your fare to London by the railway?"

But Daisy was guilty of a great breach of good manners, for she did not answer a question of the Queen's. She only bent her bright head and kissed the lovely hand. And when she raised it, a tear glittered there which rivalled the flashing of the royal rings.

Photographic Leaves.

DAINTY XMAS CARDS THAT CAN BE MADE BY GIRLISH FINGERS.

By CRICHOPE LINN.

One of the charms of amateur photography is its adaptability to the production of pretty little Christmas or Birthday cards, either for presentation or for sale. So evident is this fact that we are already, from surfeit, beginning to tire of the amateur's card, even though the photograph be a really good one, and the mount highly artistic and up-to-date. There has not yet been evolved any effective substitute for the time-honoured greeting-card, and all that we can do, therefore, is to so touch up our cards as to render them somewhat out of the common.

A PHOTOGRAPHIC LEAF CHRISTMAS CARD.

There were some articles in The Girl's Realm last year showing how to combine photography and painting in the production of novel Christmas cards; but, though the effects obtainable were undoubtedly both pretty and novel, yet the process necessitated the possession of a certain amount of skill in the use of the brush. The processes I am about to describe are, to the best of my belief, novel; and I trust that they will be found to produce artistic effects; while, though a draftsman (or should I rather say, a "drafts-*girl*"?) will be able to greatly enhance the beauty of the results, yet skill in drawing is not essential to the accomplishment of the processes themselves.

To start work. First get some leaves from your garden, from a field, hedgerow, copse, or wherever there is any plant-life—for even the ugliest weed may on examination be found to bear leaves suitable for our purpose. Dame Nature is extremely prodigal of beauty, and her leaf-designs have a variety of shapes—such as hearts, shields, ovals, pears, lance-heads, spades, etc., etc., many of them most delicately crenated or notched. The leaves for our purpose should be somewhat broad, so that we can get a fair amount of picture on them, though long and narrow leaves answer well for special sorts of pictures, *e.g.*, full-length portraits, the background of which is uninteresting; long bridges, with an extensive sweep of plain sky above and a wide stretch of clear water below, etc. Rose, grape, currant, and oak-leaves may be cited as examples of useful leaves, though the class is practically limitless. Of course the leaves we gather must be somewhat smaller than the size of the negative we use, and it is as well to have a variety of sizes of leaves, say, for a quarter-plate negative, ranging from an inch-and-a-half to three-and-a-half inches in length and proportionately broad, so as to enable us to reproduce only what is best in each view.

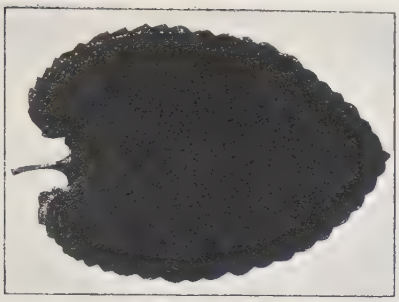


FIG. 1.—THE OUTLINE OF A SELECTED LEAF CUT OUT IN OPAQUE BLACK PAPER.

1.—Leaf-shapes on black backgrounds.

If you can draw the outline of the selected leaf with accuracy, do so on a piece of ordinary paper, carefully cut out the pencilled outline, and render the paper opaque with a coat or two of Indian (Chinese) ink. Opaque black paper can be obtained at photographic shops, but paper treated in this manner answers just as well.

If, on the other hand, you do not possess the skill to make a correct outline of the leaf (and a badly drawn leaf looks very ungainly), press it between sheets of blotting-paper placed under a box or otherwise weighted, till it is quite dry, when, by placing it on a sheet of paper, the outline can be easily drawn by following the edge of the leaf with a pencil. If, however, you find even this does not give good results, you can generally render the leaf itself opaque by a thick coat or two of Indian ink, but in this last case you must be careful to see that there are no small holes in the leaf, which would produce ugly black spots or patches on your prints.

When you are ready to use the prepared leaf or its paper facsimile (Fig. 1), put a piece of glass (*e.g.*, a spoiled negative with the film removed), carefully cleaned, in your printing frame; on this place the leaf, and over it a sheet of sensitised paper. Print till the exposed portions of the paper have attained the maximum density of discolouration, which will take only a few minutes in sunlight, when, if your leaf was properly opaque, you will obtain a white image of it on a dark background (Fig. 2). Place this print on your negative in the usual manner, taking care that such parts of the picture as you wish printed are over the *white* portion of the paper, and print to the usual depth. The result should be as in Fig. 3. If, however, there

FIG. 2.—THE WHITE IMAGE OF THE LEAF OBTAINED BY PRINTING IT ON SENSITISED PAPER.

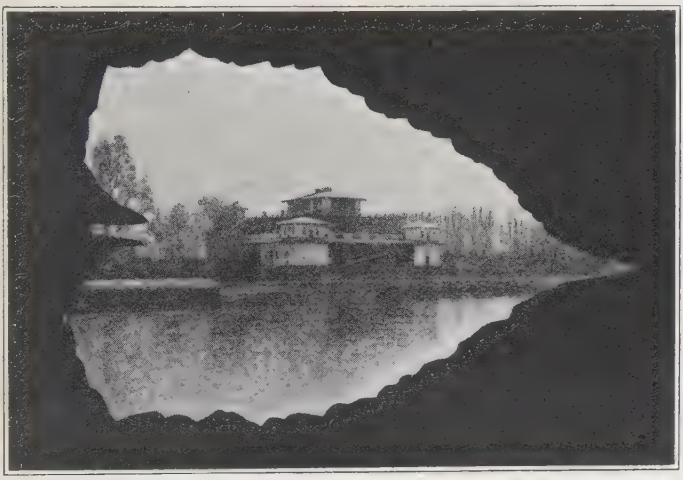


FIG. 3.—THE PRETTIEST SORT OF PHOTOGRAPHIC LEAF CARD.

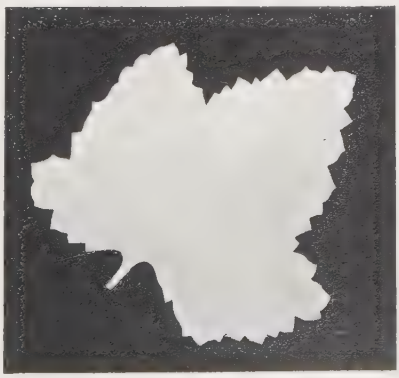


FIG. 5.—A LEAF SHAPE WITH A WHITE BACKGROUND, SECURED BY MAKING A PAPER SCREEN WITH AN OPENING IN THE CENTRE THE FACSIMILE OF THE LEAF.

FIG. 4.—A VIGNETTED PHOTOGRAPHIC LEAF.

are dark masses near the edges of the printed portions of the picture, the outline of the leaf will be more or less obliterated in these parts. In such a case, it is better to make a vignette, the edges of which should be well within the circumference of the leaf. This, if properly done, is very effective (Fig. 4).

2.—Leaf-shapes with white backgrounds.

In order to have a leaf-shape with a white background, proceed just as you did before to obtain an outline of the leaf, but, instead of cutting out an imitation of the leaf, make a paper screen, the outer edges of which are rectangular, and the exact size of the negative, with an opening in the centre the facsimile of the leaf (Fig. 5). The paper used for this process should be thin (*e.g.*, foreign letter paper), as thick paper tends to give prints the edges of which are more or less blurred, on account of such portions of the paper not being in contact with the negative. Render the paper opaque with Indian ink, place in the printing-frame between the negative and the sensitised paper and print in the ordinary way. This will give you a result similar to Fig. 6. This process does not lend itself to vignetting, but is none the less effective in appearance.

3.—Prints on veined leaves.

A pretty variant to the foregoing devices can be obtained by selecting a fairly translucent leaf with pretty veinings (an ivy leaf does very well), and pasting on the centre of it a small paper circle or oval, or painting the centre with Indian ink, and then printing over plain glass till the markings of the leaf are sharp and distinct, the protected portion showing as a white

FIG. 6.—HERE THE PAPER IS RENDERED OPAQUE WITH INDIAN INK, PLACED IN THE PRINTING FRAME BETWEEN NEGATIVE AND SENSITISED PAPER, AND PRINTED IN THE ORDINARY WAY.

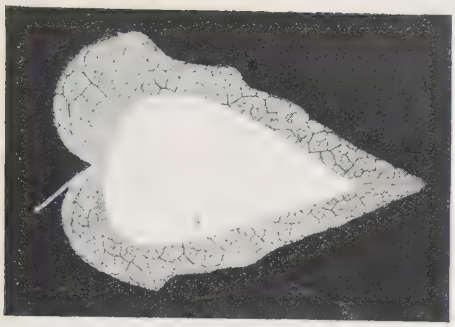


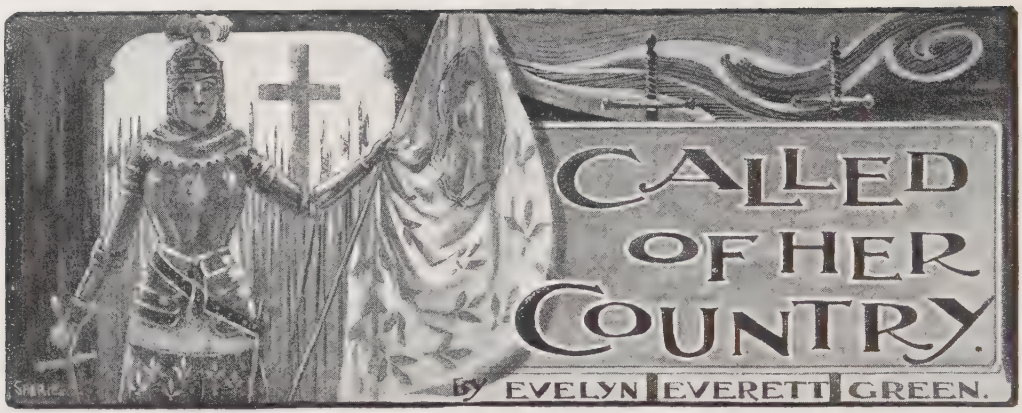
FIG. 7.—HERE THE LEAF IS PAINTED ON THE CENTRE OF A SMALL OVAL, THE CENTRE PAINTED WITH INDIAN INK, AND THE WHOLE PRINTED OVER PLAIN GLASS TILL THE MARKINGS OF THE LEAF ARE SHARP AND DISTINCT.

disc (Fig. 7). Unless the leaf is very thick and fleshy, it is advisable to print in bright shade, not in direct sunlight, as the latter is liable to obliterate the impression of the more delicate veins. When done, place the print over a negative and make a vignette to cover the white disc, so as to obtain something of the effect of Fig. 8.

Very often we obtain a negative of which only a tiny portion is really worth printing, the rest being uninteresting foreground or plain sky. If we cut out this little bit and paste it on to a mount the size of our plate, the poor little thing shrinks together, and seems to be trying to hide in the centre of the wide expanse of margin. With leaves and leaf-openings of various sizes, we can, to a great extent, avoid such a bald effect as the above. But when the portion which you wish to print of such a negative happens to be on the side of the plate, you may find that the plate does not permit of the use of the leaf-screen. In this case, use a frame for a larger-sized negative (say a 5 in. by 4 in. frame for a quarter-plate picture), adapting it by a piece of cardboard the size of the interior of the frame, with the inner space slightly smaller than the negative (something on the principle of a carrier in a dark slide). Unless you have a screen consisting of a very tiny leaf with a very wide margin of paper all round it, this dodge will enable you to print any portion of your negative, even quite close to the edge of the glass.

A photographic leaf of any of the sorts described above looks extremely well pasted over a spatter-work design of ferns and feathery leaves, but it is needless for me to suggest lines for improving on the suggestions I have set forth above, as I have no doubt that nimble brains and clever and artistic girl-fingers will discover and construct for themselves many ingenious modifications of my crude ideas.

FIG. 8.—A DAINTY EXAMPLE OF A PHOTOGRAPHIC LEAF CARD.



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE MAID WAS HINDERED; YET MADE PREPARATION.

I HAVE no patience to write of the things which followed. I blush for the King, for his Council, yea, even for the Church itself! Here was a messenger sent from God, sent to France in the hour of her direst need. This messenger had been tried and tested by a score of different methods already, and had in every case come forth from the trial like gold submitted to the fire. Priests had examined and found nothing evil in her. Again and again had she spoken of that which must follow—and so it had been. If her voices were not from God, then must they be from the Devil; yet it had been proved again, and yet again, that this was impossible, since she feared nought that was holy or good, but clave unto such, and was never so joyful and glad at heart as when she was able to receive the Holy Sacrament, or kneel before the Altar of God whilst Mass was being said.

She had proved her claim to be called God's messenger. She had justified herself as such in the eyes of the King, and in the judgment of the two Queens and of half the Court. And yet, forsooth, he must waver and doubt, and let himself be led by the counsels of those who had ever set themselves against the Maid and her mission; and to the shame of the Church be it spoken, the Archbishop of Rheims was one of those who most zealously sought to persuade him of the peril of entrusting great matters to the hands of a simple peasant girl, and warned the whole Court of the perils of witchcraft and sorcery which were like to be the undoing of all who meddled therein.

I could have wrung the neck of the wily old fox, whom I did more blame than I did his friend and advocate, De la Tremouille; for the latter only professed carnal wisdom and prudence, but the Bishop spoke as one who has a mandate from God, and he at least should have known better.

And so they must needs send her to Poictiers, to a gathering of ecclesiastics, assembled by her enemy, the Archbishop himself, to examine into her claims to be that which she professed, and also into her past life, and what it had been.

I scarce have patience to write of all the wearisome weeks which were wasted thus, whilst this assembly sat, and the Maid—all alone in her innocence, her purity, her sweetness, and gentle reverence—stood before them, day after day, to answer subtle questions, face a casuistry which sought to entrap her into contradiction or confusion, or to win from her an admission that she was no heaven-sent messenger, but was led away by her own imaginations and ambitions.

It was an ordeal which made even her devoutest adherents tremble; for we knew the astuteness of the churchmen, and how that they would seek to win admissions which they would pervert to their own uses afterwards. Yet we need not have feared; for the Maid's simplicity and perfectly fearless faith in her mission carried her triumphant through all; or perhaps, indeed, her voices whispered to her what answers she should make, for some of them were remembered long, and evoked great wonder in the hearts of those who heard

them. One Dominican monk sought to perplex her by asking why, since God had willed that France should be delivered through her, she had need of armed men? Full fearlessly and sweetly she looked at him as she made answer: "It is my Lord's will that I ask for soldiers, and that the Dauphin shall give me them. The men shall fight; it is God who gives the victory." Another rough questioner amongst her judges sought to confuse her by asking what language her voices spoke. They say that a flash flew from her eyes, though her sweet voice was as gentle as ever as she made answer: "A better language than yours, my father." And again, when the same man sought to know more of her faith and her love of God, having shown himself very sceptical of her voices and visions, she answered him, with grave dignity and an earnest, steadfast gaze: "I trow I have a better faith than yours, my father." And so, through all, her courage never failed, her faith never faltered, her hope shone undimmed.

"They must give me that which I ask; they cannot withstand God. They cannot hurt me. For this work was I born, and until it be accomplished I am safe. I have no fear."

Only once did she show anger, and then it was with a quiet dignity of displeasure, far removed from petulance or impatience. They asked of her a sign that she was what she professed.

"I have not come to Poictiers to give a sign," she answered, holding her head high, and looking fearlessly into the faces of those who sat to judge her; "Send me to Orleans, with as small a band as you will. But send me there, and you shall see signs and to spare that I come in the power of the King of Heaven."

And so in the end her faith and courage triumphed. The verdict ran somewhat thus:— "We have found in her nothing but what is good. To deny or hinder her intentions to serve the King would be to show ourselves unworthy of the assistance of God."

Yes, they had to come to it; and I trust that there were many sitting there whose hearts smote them for ever having doubted, or sought to baffle or entrap her. I cannot tell how far the judges were moved by the growing feeling in the town and throughout the district. But the people crowded to see the Maid pass by, and all were ready to fall at her feet and worship her. In the evenings they visited her at the house of Jean Ratabeau, the Advocate-General, whose wife formed for her (as did every good and true woman with whom she came into contact during her life) an ardent admiration and affection. And to their earnest questions she gave ready answer, sitting in the midst of an eager crowd, and telling them in her sweet and simple way the story of her life in Domrémy, and how she had first heard these voices from Heaven, or seen wondrous visions of unspeakable glories; and how she had learnt, by slow degrees, that which her Lord had for her to do, and had lost, by little and little, the fear which first possessed her, till now she knew not of the name of the word. She had but to follow where her voices guided.

And the people believed in her, heart and soul. Her fame spread far and wide, and had she lifted but a finger, she might have been at the head of an armed band of citizens and soldiers, yea, and many gentlemen and knights as well, all vowed to live and die in her service. But this was not what was her destiny.

"I thank you, my friends," she would say, if such a step were proposed by any ardent soul, impatient of this long delay; "but thus it may not be. My Lord has decreed that the Dauphin shall send me forth at the head of his armies, and with a troop of his soldiers; and he will do this ere long. Be not afraid. We must needs have patience, as did our Lord Himself, and be obedient, as He was. For only as we look to Him for grace and guidance can we hope to do His perfect will."

Thus spoke the Maid, who, being without letters, and knowing, as she said, no prayers save the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo, yet could speak in such fashion to those who sought her. Was it wonder that the people believed in her? That they would have been ready to tear in pieces any who durst contemn her mission, or declare her possessed of evil spirits? Yet I will not say that it was fear which possessed the hearts of her judges, and decided their ruling in this matter. I trow they could not look upon her, or hear her, without conviction of heart. Nevertheless it is possible that the respect for popular enthusiasm led them to speak in such high praise of the Maid, and to add that she was in the right in assuming the dress which she wore. For she had been sent to do man's work, and that for this a man's garb was the only fitting one to wear. And this ruling was heard with great acclamation of satisfaction; for her dress had been almost more commented upon than any other matter by some; and that the Church had set its sanction upon that which common sense deemed most right and fitting, robbed the most doubtful of all scruple, and gave to the Maid herself no small pleasure.

"I do in this, as in all other things, that which I have been bidden," she said. "But I would

not willingly act unseemly in the eyes of good men and virtuous women; wherefore I am glad that my judges have spoken thus, and I thank them from my heart for their gentle treatment of me."

It was ever thus with the Maid. No anger or impatience overset her sweet serenity and humility. She would not let herself take offence, or resent these ordeals to which, time after time, she was subjected. Nay, it was she who defended the proceedings when we attacked them, saying that it behoved men to act with care and caution in these great matters, and that her only trouble in the delay was the sufferings and sorrows of the poor beleaguered garrison and citizens in Orleans, to whose help and relief she longed to fly.

So certain was she that before long she would be upon her way, that at Poictiers she composed that letter to the English King, his Regent, and his Generals, which has been so much talked of since. It was a truly wonderful letter to be written by a village maiden; for in it she adjured them to cease from warring with the rightful King of France, whom God would have to rule the realm for Him, to go back to their own country, leaving peace behind them instead of war, and imploring them then to join with the King of France in a crusade against the Saracens. She speaks of herself as one who has power to drive them from the kingdom if they will not go in peace as adjured. Calling herself throughout "The Maid," she tells them plainly that they will not be able to stand against her; that she will come against them in the power of the King of Heaven, Who will give to her more strength than ever can be brought against her; and in particular she begs of them to retire from the city of Orleans; else, if they do not, they shall come to great misfortune there.

This letter took some time in the composition, and was written for her by Sir Guy de Laval, though we were all in her counsel as she composed it. By this I do not mean that we advised her. On the contrary, we gazed at her amazed, knowing how fruitless such an injunction must be to the haughty victorious nation, who had us, so to speak, in the dust at her feet. But the Maid saw with other eyes than ours.

"It may be that there will be some holy man of God in their camp to whom my Lord will reveal His will, as he hath done to me, and will show the things which must come to pass. I would so willingly spare all the bloodshed and misery which war will bring. It is so terrible a thing for Christian men to war one with another!"

So this letter, with its superscription "JHESUS MARIA," was written and dispatched to the English, and the Maid turned her attention to other matters near her heart, such as the design and execution of those banners which were to be carried before her armies in battle, and lead them on to victory. And these same words, "Jhesus Maria," she decreed should appear upon each of the three standards, in token that she went not forth in her own strength, nor even in that of the King of France; but in the power which was from above, and in the strength given her by those who sent her.

Now there came to Poictiers to see the Maid at this time, many persons from other places, and amongst these was a Scotchman called Hauves Polnoir, who brought with him his daughter, a fair girl, between whom and the Maid a great love speedily sprang up. These Polnoirs were the most skilful workers in embroideries and such like of all the country round, and to them was entrusted the making of the three banners, according to the instructions of the Maid. There was first the great white silken standard, with the golden fleur-de-lys of France, and a representation on the reverse of the Almighty God between two adoring angels; then a smaller banner, with a device representing the Annunciation, which she always gave to one of her immediate attendants or squires to carry into battle; and for herself she had a little triangular banneret of white, with an image of the Crucified Christ upon it, and this she carried herself, and was destined to be the rallying point of innumerable engagements, for the sight of that little fluttering pennon showed the soldiers where the Maid was leading them, and though this was in the thickest and sorest of the strife, they would press towards it with shouts of joy and triumph, knowing that where the Maid led, there victory was won.

All these matters were arranged whilst we were kept in waiting at Poictiers; and the Polnoirs returned to Tours to execute the orders there in their own workshop. The Maid promised to visit them on her way from Chinon to Orleans, and so bid them a kindly farewell. Perhaps I may here add, that when the Dauphin, upon his coronation, insisted upon presenting the Maid with a sum of money, the use she made of it, after offering at various shrines, was to provide a marriage dowry for Janet Polnoir. Never did she think of herself; never did she desire this world's goods.

This was shown very plainly upon her triumphant return to Chinon, with the blessing and sanction of the Church upon her mission, with the enthusiasm of the people growing and in-

creasing every day, and her fame flying throughout the length and breadth of the realm. By this time the King and all his Court knew that a deliverer had been raised up in our midst, and instead of lowly lodgings being allotted to the Maid and her train, the whole Tower of Coudray was set apart for the use of herself and her suite. The custodian De Belier and his wife had charge of her, and to her were now appointed a staff, of which the brave Jean d'Aulon was the chief, and to which Bertrand and Sir Guy de Laval and myself belonged, together with many more knights and gentlemen, all anxious to do service under her banner, and some persons of lowlier degree, such as her brothers, for whom she always had tender care, and who believed devoutly in her mission, although they saw of necessity less and less of one another, as the Maid's mission progressed, and took her into a different world.

But all this grandeur was no delight to her, save inasmuch as it showed that at last her mission was recognised and honoured. When asked what she would have for herself in the matter of dress and armour, her answer was that she had already all she required, although she only possessed at this time one suit more than she had started forth with from Valcouleurs. Although she saw the courtiers fluttering about like butterflies, and saw how men, as well as women, decked themselves in choice stuffs and flashing jewels, she asked none of these things for herself; and when the Queen of Sicily, always her best and kindest friend, sent to her some clothing of her own designing — all white, and beautifully

"AS JEANNE MADE HER REVERENCE BEFORE THE KING, SHE GENTLY PUT ASIDE HIS OFFER OF A SWORD."—(*p.* 238.)

worked, some with silver, and some with gold thread and cord, and a mantle of white velvet, lined with cloth of silver—she looked at the beautiful garments with something between a smile and a sigh; then turning towards the great lady who stood by to watch her, she first kissed her hand, and then, with a sudden impulse of affection, put her arms about her neck, and was drawn into a close embrace.

"Are you not pleased with them, my child?" spoke Queen Yolande gently; "they would have decked you in all the colours of the rainbow, and made you to blaze with jewels; but I would not have it. The Virgin Maid, I told them, should be clad all in white, and my word prevailed, and thus you see your snowy raiment. I had thought you would be pleased with it, *ma mie*."

"Madame, it is beautiful; I have never dreamed of such. It is too fine, too costly for such as I. I am but a peasant maid—"

"You are the chosen of the King of Heaven, my child. You must think also of that. You are now the leader of the King's armies. You have to do honour alike to a Heavenly and an earthly Monarch; and shall we let our champion go forth without such raiment as is fitting to her mission?"

Then the Maid bent her head, and answered with sweet gladness:

"If it is thus that the world regards me, I will wear these trappings with a glad and thankful heart; for in sooth I would seek to do honour to His Majesty. As for my Lord in the Heavens, I trow that he doth look beneath such matters of gay adornment; yet even so, I would have His mission honoured in the sight of all men, and His messenger fitly arrayed."

So the Maid put on her spotless apparel, and looked more like a youthful warrior, going forth with stainless shield, in the quest of chivalrous adventure, than I have any power to tell. The whole Court was entranced by her beauty, her lofty dignity, her strange air of aloofness from the world, which made her move amongst them as a thing apart, and seemed to set a seal upon her every word and act. When she spoke of the coming strife, and her plans for the relief of the beleaguered city, her eyes would shine, a ringing note of authority would be heard in her voice, she would fearlessly enter into debate with the King and his Ministers, and tell them that which she was resolved to do, whether they counselled it or no. At such moments she appeared gifted with a power impossible rightly to describe. Without setting herself up in haughtiness, she yet overbore all opposition by her serene composure and calm serenity in the result. Men of war said that she spoke like a soldier and a strategist; they listened to her in amaze, and wondered what the great La Hire would say when he should arrive to find that a country maiden had been set over his head.

In other matters, too, the Maid knew her mind, and spoke it with calm decision. The Queen of Sicily had not been content with ordering the Maid's dress alone, she had also given orders to the first armourer in Tours to fashion her a suit of light armour for the coming strife. This armour was of white metal, and richly inlaid with silver, so that when the sun glinted upon it it shone with a dazzling white radiance, almost blinding to behold. The King, also, resolved to do his share, had ordered for her a light sword, with a blade of Toledo steel; but though the Maid gratefully accepted the gift of the white armour, and appeared before all the Court attired therein, and with her head-piece, with its floating white plumes crowning it all, yet, as she made her reverence before the King, she gently put aside his gift of the sword.

"Gentle Dauphin," she said, "I thank you from my heart; but for me there is another sword which I must needs carry with me into battle; and I pray you give me leave to send and fetch it from where it lies unknown and forgotten."

"Why, Maiden, of what speak you?" he answered; "is not this jewelled weapon good enough? You will find its temper of the best. I know not where you will find a better!"

"No better a sword, Sire," she answered; "and yet the one which I must use; for so it hath been told me of my Lord. In the church of Fierbois, six leagues from hence, beneath the high altar, there lies a sword, and this sword must I use. Suffer me, I pray you, to send and fetch it thence. Then shall I be ready and equipped to sally forth against the foes of my country."

"But who has told you of this sword, my maiden?"

"My Lord did tell me of it, as I knelt before the altar, ere I came to Chinon. It is in the church of St. Catherine; and suffer only my good knight, Jean de Metz, to go and make search for it, and he will surely bring it hither to me."

Now I did well remember how, as we knelt in the church at Fierbois in the dimness of the early morn, the Maid had received some message, unheard by those beside her; and gladly did I set forth upon mine errand to seek and bring to her this sword.

When I reached Fierbois, which was in the forenoon of the day following, the good priests of the church knew nothing of any such sword; but the

"THE MAID ENTERED TOURS AMID THE CLASHING OF JOY BELLS AND THE PLAUDITS OF THE PEOPLE."—(*p.* 241.)

fame of the Maid having reached their ears, they were proud and glad that their church of St. Catherine should be honoured thus, and calling together some workmen, they made careful search, and sure enough, before we had dug deep, the spade struck and clinked against metal, and forth from beneath the altar we drew a sword, once a strong and well-tempered weapon, doubtless, but now covered with rust, so that the good priests looked askance at it, and begged to have it to cleanse and polish.

It was then too late for my return the same day, so I left it to them, and lodged me in the town, where all the people flocked to hear news of the Maid and of the coming campaign. Then in the morning, with the first of the light, the sword was brought to me; and surely many persons in Fierbois must have sat up all the night, for every speck of rust had been cleansed away, and a velvet scabbard made or found for the weapon, which the priests begged of me to take with it to the Maid as their gift, and with their benediction upon it and her.

My return was awaited with some stir of interest, and before I had well dismounted I was hurried, all travel-stained as I was, into the presence of the King. There was the Maid waiting also, calm and serene, and when she saw the thing which I carried in my hands, her face lighted; she took several steps forward, and bent her knee as she reverently took the sword, as though she took it from some Higher Power.

"It was even as she said?" questioned the King, quickly.

"Even so, Sire; the sword of which no man knew aught, was lying buried beneath the high altar of St. Catherine's church, in Fierbois."

A murmur of surprise and gratification ran through the assembly. But there was no surprise upon the Maid's face.

"Did you doubt, Sire?" she asked, and he could not meet the glance of her clear eyes.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THE MAID MARCHED FOR ORLEANS.

METHINKS that the Maid loved that ancient sword better than all her shining armour of silver! Strange to say, the velvet sheath of the King's Toledo blade fitted the weapon from Fierbois, and he supplemented the priests' gift of a scabbard by this second rich one. The Maid accepted it with graceful thanks; yet both the gorgeous cases were laid away, and a simple sheath of leather made; for the sword was to be carried at her side into battle, and neither white nor crimson velvet was suited to such a purpose.

Nor would the Maid let us have her sword sharpened for her. A curious look came upon her face as Bertrand pointed out that although now clean and shining, its edges were too blunt for real use. She looked round upon us as we stood before her, and passed her fingers lovingly down the edges of the weapon.

"I will keep it as it is," she answered; "for though I must needs carry it into battle with me, I pray my Lord that it may never be my duty to shed Christian blood. And if the English King will but listen to the words of counsel which I have sent to him, perchance it may even now be that bloodshed will be spared."

In sooth, I believe that she would far rather have seen the enemy disperse of their own accord than win the honour and glory of the campaign, which she knew beforehand would bring to her renown, the like of which no woman in the world's history has ever won. She would have gone back gladly, I truly believe, to her home in Domrémy, and uttered no plaint, even though men ceased after the event to give her the praise and glory; for herself she never desired such.

But we, who knew the temper of the English, were well aware that this would never be. Even though they might by this time have heard somewhat of the strange thing which had happened, and how the French were rallying round the standard of the Angelic Maid, yet would they not readily believe that their crushed and beaten foes would have power to stand against them. More ready would they be to scoff than to fear.

Now, at last, after all these many hindrances and delays, all was in readiness for the start. April had well-nigh run its course, and nature was looking her gayest and loveliest when the day came that we marched forth out of the Castle of Chinon, a gallant little army, with the Maid in her shining white armour and her fluttering white pennon at our head, and took the road to Tours, where the great and redoubtable La Hire was to meet us, and where we were to find a great band of recruits and soldiers, all eager now to be led against the foe.

Much did we wonder how the Generals of the French army would receive the Maid, set, in a sense, over them as Commander-in-Chief of this expedition, with a mandate from the King that she was to be obeyed, and that her counsels and directions were to be followed. We heard conflicting rumours on this score. There were those who declared that so desperate was the condition of the city, and so disheartened the garrison and citizens that they welcomed with joy the thought of this deliverer, and believed already

that she was sent of God for their succour and salvation. Others, on the contrary, averred that the officers of the army laughed to scorn the thought of being aided or led by a woman—a peasant—*une péronelle de bas lieu*, as they scornfully called her—and that they would never permit themselves to be led or guided by one who could have no knowledge of war, even though she might be able to read the secrets of the future. In spite of what had been now ruled by the Church concerning her, there were always those, both in the French and English camps, who called her a witch; and we, who heard so many flying rumours, wondered greatly what view the redoubtable La Hire took of this matter, and Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans, as he was often called—for these two men, with Xaintrailles, were the ruling generals in Orleans, and their voice would be paramount with the army there, and would carry much weight with those reinforcements for the relieving force which we were to find awaiting us at Tours and at Blois.

Now La Hire, as all men know, was a man of great renown, and of immense personal weight and influence. He was a giant in stature, with a voice like a trumpet, and thews of steel; a mighty man in battle, a daring leader, yet cautious and sagacious withal; a man feared and beloved by those whom he led in warfare; a gay roysterer at other times, with as many strange oaths upon his lips as there are saints in the calendar; what the English call a swashbuckler and dare-devil; a man whom one would little look to be led or guided by a woman, for he was impatient of counsel, and headstrong alike in thought and action.

And this was the man who was to meet us at Tours, form his impression of the Maid, and throw the great weight of his personal influence either into one scale or the other. Truth to tell, I was something nervous of this ordeal, and there were many who shared my doubts and fears. But the Maid rode onward, serene and calm, the light of joy and hope in her eyes, untroubled by any doubts. At last she was on her way to the relief of the beleaguered city; there was no room for misgiving in her faithful heart.

We entered Tours amid the clashing of joy-bells, the plaudits of the people, the laughter, the weeping, the blessings of an excited populace, who regarded the Maid as the saviour of the realm. They crowded to their windows and waved flags and kerchiefs. They thronged upon her in the streets to gaze at her fair face and greet her as a deliverer. It was indeed a moving scene; but she rode through it, calm and tranquil, pausing in the press to speak a few words of thanks and greeting, but preserving always her gentle maidenly air of dignity and reserve. And so we came to the house which had been set apart for her use on her stay, and there we saw, standing at the foot of the steps which led from the courtyard into the house, a mighty, mailed figure, the head-piece alone lacking of his full armour, a carven warrior, as it seemed, with folded arms and bent brows, gazing upon us as we filed in under the archway, but making no move to approach us.

I did not heed the whisper which ran through the ranks of our escort to know that this man was the great and valiant La Hire.

As the Maid's charger paused at the foot of the steps, this man strode forward with his hand upraised as in a salute, and giving her his hand, he assisted her to alight, and for a few moments the two stood looking into each other's eyes with mutual recognition, taking, as it were, each the measure of the other. The Maid was the first to speak, her eyes lighting with that deep down, indescribable smile, which she kept for her friends alone. When I saw that smile in her eyes, as they were upraised to La Hire's face, all my fears vanished in a moment.

"You are the Dauphin's brave General La Hire, from Orleans," she said; "I thank you, monsieur, for your courtesy in coming thus to meet me. For so can we take counsel together how best the enemies of our country may be overthrown."

"You are the Maid, sent of God and the King for the deliverance of the realm," answered La Hire, as he lifted her hand to his lips, "I bid you welcome in the name of Orleans, its soldiers, and its citizens. For we have been like men beneath a spell—a spell too strong for us to break. You come to snap the spell, to break the yoke, and therefore I bid you great welcome on the part of myself and the citizens and soldiers of Orleans. Without your counsels to His Majesty, and the aid you have persuaded him to send, the city must assuredly have fallen ere this. Only the knowledge that help was surely coming has kept us from surrender."

"I would the help had come sooner, my General," spoke the Maid; "but soon or late it is one with my Lord, who will give us the promised victory."

From that moment friendship, warm and true, was established betwixt the bronzed warrior and the gentle Maid, who took up, as by natural right, her position of equal—indeed, of superior—in command, not with any haughty assumption, not

with any arrogant words or looks, but naturally, as though there were no question but that the place was hers; that to her belonged the ordering of the forces, the overlooking of all. Again and again, even we, who had come to believe so truly in her divine commission, were astonished at the insight she showed, the sagacity of her counsels, the wonderful authority she was able to exert over the soldiers brought together, a rude, untrained, insubordinate mass of men, collected from all ranks and classes of the people, some being little better than bands of marauders, living on prey and plunder, since of regular fighting there had been little of late; others, mercenaries hired by the nobles to swell their own retinues; many raw recruits, fired by ardour at the thought of the promised deliverance; a few regular trained bands, with their own officers in command, but forming altogether a heterogeneous company, by no means easy to drill into order, and swelled by another contingent at Blois, of very much the same material.

But the Maid assembled the army together, and thus addressed them. At least, this was the substance of her words; nothing can reproduce the wonderful earnestness and power of her voice and look, for her face kindled as she spoke, and the sunshine playing upon her as she sat her charger in the glory of her silver armour, seemed to encompass her with a pure white light, so that men's eyes were dazzled as they looked upon her, and they whispered one to the other:

"The Angelic Maid! The Angelic Maid! surely it is an Angel of God come straight down from Heaven to aid and lead us."

"My friends," she spoke, and her voice carried easily to every corner of the great square, packed with a human mass, motionless, hanging upon her words, "My friends, we are about to start forth upon a crusade as holy as it is possible for men to be concerned in, for it is as saviours and deliverers of your brethren and our country that we go; and the Lord of Hosts is with us. He has bidden us march, and He has promised to go with us, even as He was with the Israelites of old. And if we do not see His presence in pillar of cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, we yet do know and feel Him near us; and He will give abundant proof that He fights upon our side!"

She lifted her face for a moment to the sky. She was bareheaded, and every head was bared in that vast crowd as she spoke the name of God. It seemed as though a light from Heaven fell upon her as she spoke, and a deep murmur ran through the throng. It was as if they answered that they needed no other vision than that of the Maid herself.

"If then the Lord be with us, must we not show ourselves worthy of His holy presence in our midst? O my friends, since I have been with you these few days, my heart has been pained and grieved by that which I have heard and seen. Oaths and blasphemies fall from your lips, and you scarce know it yourselves. Drunkenness and vice prevail. O my friends, let this no longer be amongst us! Let us cleanse ourselves from all impurities; let our conversation be yea, yea, nay, nay. Let none take the name of the Lord in vain, nor soil His holy cause by vice and uncleanness. O let us all, day by day, as the sun rises anew each morning, assemble to hear Mass, and to receive the Holy Sacrament. Let every man make his confession. Holy priests are with us to hear all, and to give absolution. Let us start forth upon the morrow purified and blessed of God, and let us day by day renew that holy cleansing and blessing, that the Lord may indeed be with us and rest amongst us, and that His heart be not grieved and burdened by that which He shall see and hear amongst those to whom He has promised His help and blessing!"

Thus she spoke; and a deep silence fell upon all, in the which it seemed to me the fall of a pin might have been heard. The Maid sat quite still for a moment, her own head bent as though in prayer. Then she lifted it, and a radiant smile passed over her face, a smile as of assurance and thankful joy. She raised her hand and waved it, almost as though she blessed, whilst she greeted her soldiers, and then she turned her horse, the crowd making way for her in deep reverential silence, and rode towards her own lodging, where she remained shut up in her own room for the rest of the day.

But upon the following morning a strange thing had happened. Every single camp follower—all the women and all the disorderly rabble that hangs upon the march of an army—had disappeared. They had slunk off in the night, and were utterly gone. The soldiers were gathered in the churches to hear Mass. All that could do so attended where it was known the Maid would be, and when she had received the Sacrament herself, hundreds crowded to do the like; and I suppose there were thousands in the city that day, who, having confessed and received absolution, received the pledge of the Lord's death, though perhaps some of them had not thought of such a duty for years and years.

And here I may say that this was not an act for once and all. Day by day in the camp

Mass was celebrated, and the Holy Sacrament given to all who asked and came. The Maid ever sought to begin the day thus, and we of her personal household generally followed her example. Even La Hire would come and kneel beside her, a little behind, though it was some while before he desired to partake of the Sacrament himself. But to be near her in this act of devotion seemed to give him joy and confidence; and for her sake, because he saw it pained her, he sought to break off his habit of profane swearing, and the use of those strange oaths before which men had been wont to quake. And she, seeing how sorely tried he was to keep from some accustomed oath, did come to his aid with one of her frank and almost boy-like smiles, and told him that he might swear by his bâton if he needs must use some expletive; but that no holy name must lightly pass his lips.

Strange indeed was it to see the friendship which had so quickly sprung up between that rough warrior and the Maid, whom he could almost have crushed to death between his mighty hands. If all the Generals in the army were as noble-minded as he, and as ready to receive her whom God had sent them, we should have little to fear; but there was Dunois yet to reckon with, who had promised to come forth and meet her outside the town (for the blockade, as I have before said, was not perfect; and on the south side men could still come and go with caution and care), and to lead her in triumph within it, if the English showed not too great resistance.

But even now we were to find how that they did not yet trust the Maid's authority as it should be trusted; and even La Hire was in fault here, as afterwards he freely owned. For the Maid had told them to lead her to the city on the north side, as her plan was to strike straight through the English lines, and scatter the besieging force ere ever she entered the town at all. But since the city lies to the north of the river, and the English had built around it twelve great bastilles, as they called them, and lay in all their strength on this side, it seemed too venturesome to attack in such a manner; and in this La Hire and Dunois were both agreed. But La Hire did not tell the Maid of any disagreements, but knowing the country to be strange to her, he led her and the army by a route which she believed the right one, till suddenly we beheld the towers of Orleans and the great surrounding fortifications rising up before our eyes; and, behold! the wide river with its bridge more than half destroyed, lay between us and our goal.

At this sight the eyes of the Maid flashed fire, and she turned them upon La Hire, but spoke never a word. His face flushed a dull crimson with a sudden, unexpected shame. To do him justice be it said, that (as we later heard) he had been against this deception after having seen the Maid; but there were now many notable generals and marshals and officers with the army, all of whom were resolved upon this course of action, which had been agreed upon before-

"'YOU ARE THE MAID, SENT OF GOD AND THE KING, FOR THE DELIVERANCE OF THE REALM,' SAID LA HIRE, AS HE LIFTED HER HAND TO HIS LIPS." —(*p.* 241.)

hand with Dunois, and they had overborne his objections, which were something faint-hearted perhaps, for with his love and admiration for the Maid, he trembled, as he now explained to her, to lead her by so perilous a route, and declared that she could well be conducted into the city by the Burgundy gate, by water, without striking a blow, instead of having to fight her way in past the English bastions.

"I thank you for your care for me, my friend," she answered, "but it were better to have obeyed my voice. The English arrows could not have touched me. We should have entered unopposed. Now much precious time must needs be lost, for how can this great army be transported across yonder river, and the bridge, even if we could dislodge the English from the tower of Les Tourelles, is broken down and useless."

Indeed it seemed plain to all that the Generals had made a great blunder; for though we marched on to Chécy, where Dunois met us, and whence some of the provisions brought for the starving city could be dispatched in the boats assembled there, it was plain that there was no transport sufficient for the bulk of the army; and the Maid, as she and Dunois stood face to face, at last regarded him with a look of grave and searching scrutiny.

"Are you he whom men call the Bastard of Orleans?"

"Lady, I am; and I come to welcome you with gladness, for we are sore beset by our foes; yet all within the city are taking heart of grace, believing that a Deliverer from Heaven has been sent to them."

"They think well," answered the Maid, "and right glad am I to come. But wherefore have I been led hither by this bank, instead of the one upon which Talbot and his English lie?"

"Lady, the wisest of our leaders held that this would be the safest way."

"The counsel of God and our Lord is more sure and more powerful than that of generals and soldiers," she answered gravely. "You have made an error in this. See to it that such error be not repeated. I will that in all things my Lord be obeyed."

The Generals stood dumb and discomfited before her; a thrill ran through the army when her words were repeated there; but, indeed, we all quickly saw the wisdom of her counsel and the folly of her adversaries; for the bulk of the army had perforce to march back to Blois to cross the river there, whilst only a thousand picked men with the chiefest of the Generals and the convoys of provisions prepared to enter the city by water and then through the Burgundy Gate.

At the first it seemed as though even this would be a dangerous task, for the wind blew hard in a contrary direction, and the deeply-laden boats began to be in peril of foundering. But as we stood watching them from the bank, and saw their peril, and some were for recalling them and waiting, the Maid's voice suddenly rang forth in command:

"Leave them alone, and hasten forward with the others. The wind will change, and a favouring breeze shall carry us all safe into the city. The English shall not fire a shot to hinder us, for the fear of the Maid has fallen upon them!"

We gazed at her in wonder as she stood a little apart, her face full of power and calm certainty. And indeed, it was but a very few minutes later that the wind dropped to a dead calm, and a light air sprang up from a contrary direction, and the laden boats gladly spreading sail, floated quietly onwards with their precious load towards the suffering city.

Then we embarked, somewhat silently, for the awe which fell upon those who had never seen the Maid before, extended even to us. Moreover, with those frowning towers of the English so close upon us, crowded with soldiers who seemed to know what was happening, and who were coming into Orleans, it was scarce possible not to look for resistance and hostile attack. But curious as it may seem, not a shot was fired as we passed along. A silence strange and sinister seemed to hang over the lines of the enemy; but when we reached the city how all was changed!

It was about eight o'clock in the evening when at last we finished our journey by water and land, and entered the devoted town. There the chiefest citizens came hurrying to meet us, leading a white charger for their Deliverer to ride upon. And when she was mounted, the people thronged about her weeping and shouting, blessing and hailing her as their champion and saviour. The streets were thronged with pale-faced men, women and children hung from the windows, showering flowers at our feet. Torches lit up the darkening scene, and shone from the breast-plates and head-pieces of the mailed men. But the Maid in her white armour seemed like a being from another sphere; and the cry of "St. Michael! St. Michael himself!" resounded on all sides, and one did not wonder.

Nothing would serve the Maid but to go straight to the Cathedral first, and offer thanksgiving for her arrival here, and the people

flocked with her, till the great building was filled to overflowing with her retinue of soldiers and her self-constituted followers. Some begged of her to address them from the steps at the conclusion of the brief service, but she shook her head.

"I have no words for them—only I love them all," she answered, with a little natural quiver of emotion in her voice. "Tell them so, and that I have come to save them. And then let me go home."

So La Hire stood forth and gave the Maid's message in his trumpet tones, and the Maid was escorted by the whole of the joyful and loving crowd to the house of the Treasurer Boucher, where were her quarters, and where she was received with acclamation and joy. And thus the Maid entered the beleaguered city of Orleans.

"THE EYES OF THE MAID FLASHED FIRE, AND SHE TURNED THEM UPON LA HIRE, BUT SPOKE NEVER A WORD."—(*p.* 243.)

CHAPTER IX.

HOW THE MAID ASSUMED COMMAND AT ORLEANS.

THE house of the Treasurer was a beautiful building in the Gothic style, and weary as was the Maid with the toils and excitements through which she had passed, I saw her eyes kindle with pleasure and admiration as she was ceremoniously led into the great banqueting hall, where the tables were spread with abundant good cheer (despite the reduced condition of the city), to do honour to her who came as its Deliverer.

There was something solemn and churchlike in these surroundings which appealed at once to the Maid. She had a keen eye for beauty, whether of nature or in the handiwork of man, and her quick penetrating glances missed nothing of the stately grandeur of the house, the ceremonious and courtly welcome of the Treasurer, its master, or the earnest, wistful gaze of his little daughter Charlotte, who stood holding fast to her mother's hand in the background, but feasting her great dark eyes upon the wonderful shining figure of the Maid, from whose white armour the lights of the great hall flashed back in a hundred points of fire.

The greeting of the master of the house being over, the Maid threw off for a moment the grave dignity of her bearing throughout this trying day, and became a simple girl again. With a quick grace of movement she crossed the space which divided her from the little child, and kneeling suddenly down, took the wondering little one in her arms, and held her in a close embrace.

"*Ma petite, ma mie, ma très chére,*" those nearest heard her murmur, "Love me, darling, love me! I have a little sister at home who loves me, but I had to go away and leave her. Perhaps I may never see her again. Try to love me instead, and comfort my heart, for sometimes I am very, very weary, and hungry for the love that I have lost!"

Now, one might have thought that so young a child—for she was not more than eight years old, and small for her years—would have been affrighted at the sudden approach of the shining warrior, about whom so many stories had been told, and who looked more like the Archangel Michael, as many thought, than a creature of human flesh and blood. But instead of showing any fear, the child flung her arms about the neck of the Maid, and pressed kisses upon her face—her head-piece she had removed at her entrance—and when the mother would have loosened her hold, and sent the child away with her attendant, little Charlotte resisted, clinging to her new friend with all her baby strength, and the Maid looked pleadingly up into the kindly face of the lady, and said:

"Ah, madame, I pray you let her remain with me. It is so long since I felt the arms of a child about my neck!"

And so the little one stayed to the banquet, and was given the place of honour beside the Maid. But neither of these twain had any relish for the dainty meats and rich dishes served for us. As on the march, so now in the walls of the city, the Maid fared as simply as the rudest of her soldiers. She mixed water with her wine, took little save a slice or two of bread, and though to please her hosts she just touched one or two specially prepared dishes, it was without any real relish for them, and she was evidently glad when she was able to make excuse to leave the table and go to the room prepared for her.

But here again she showed her simple tastes, for when the great guest-chamber was shown her she shrank a little at its size and luxury, and, still holding the child's hand in hers, she turned to the mother who was in attendance and said:

"I pray you, sweet lady, let me whilst I am your guest share the room of this little daughter of yours. I am but a simple country girl, all this grandeur weighs me down. If I might but sleep with this little one in my arms—as the little sister at home loved to lie—I should sleep so peacefully and have such happy dreams! Ah, madame!—let me have my will in this!"

And Madame Boucher, being a mother and a true woman, understood and answered by taking the Maid in her arms and kissing her. And so, as long as the Maid remained in Orleans, she shared the little white bedroom of the child of the house, which opened from that of the mother, and the bond which grew up between the three was so close and tender a one, that I trow the good Treasurer and his wife would fain have regarded this wonderful Maid as their own daughter, and kept her ever with them, had duty and her voices not called her elsewhere when the first part of her task was done.

Now Bertrand and I, together with Pierre, her brother, and the Chevalier d'Aulon and Sir Guy de Laval, were lodged in the same house, and entertained most hospitably by the Treasurer, who sat up with us far into the night after our arrival, listening with earnest attention to all we could tell him respecting the Maid, and telling us on his part of the feeling in Orleans anent her and her mission, and what we might expect to follow her arrival here.

"The townsfolk seem well-nigh wild for joy at sight of her," spoke De Laval, "and the more they see of her, the more they will love her and reverence her mission. I was one who did openly scoff, or at least had no faith in any miracle, until that I saw her with mine own eyes, and then some voice in my heart—I know not how to speak more plainly of it—or some wonderful power in her glance or in her voice, overcame me. And I knew that she had in very truth come from God, and I have never doubted of her divine commission from that day to this. It will be the same here in Orleans, if, indeed, there be any that doubt."

"Alas! there are—too many!" spoke the Treasurer, shaking his head, "I am rejoiced that our two greatest Generals, Dunois and La Hire have become her adherents, for I myself believe that she has been sent of God for our deliverance, and so do the townsfolk almost to a man. But there are numbers of the lesser officers—bold men and true—who have fought valiantly throughout the siege, and who have great influence with the soldiers they lead, and these men are full of disgust at the thought of being led by a woman—a girl—and one of low degree. They would be willing for her to stand aloft and prophesy victory for their arms, but that she should arm herself and lead them in battle, and direct operations herself, fills them with disgust and contempt. There is like to be trouble, I fear, with some of these. There is bold De Gamache, for example, who declares he would sooner fold up his banner and serve as a simple soldier in the ranks, than hold a command subservient to that of a low-born woman!"

That name as applied to the Angelic Maid set our teeth on edge; yet was it wonderful that some should so regard her.

"Let them but see her—and they will change their tune!" spake Bertrand quickly. "A low-born woman! Would they speak thus of the Blessed Virgin? And yet according to the wisdom of the flesh it would be as true of one as of the other."

The Treasurer spoke with grave thoughtfulness:

"Truly do I think that any person honoured by the Lord with a direct mission from Himself becomes something different by virtue of that mission from what he or she was before. Yet we may not confound this mission of the Maid here in Orleans with that one which came to the Blessed Mary."

"Nor had I any thought," answered Bertrand, "of likening one to the other, save inasmuch as both have been maidens, born in lowly surroundings, yet chosen for purity of heart and life, and for childlike faith and obedience, for the honour of receiving a divine commission. There the parallel stops; for there can be no comparison regarding the work appointed to each, yet even as this Maid shall fulfil her appointed task in obedience to the injunctions received, she is worthy to be called the handmaid of the Lord."

"To that I have nought to say but yea," answered the Treasurer heartily, "and I pray our Lord and the Blessed Virgin to be with her and strengthen her, for I fear me she will have foes to contend with from within as well as from without the city; and as all men know, it is the distrust and contradiction of so-called friends which is harder to bear than the open enmity of the foe."

It was difficult for us, vowed heart and soul to the cause of the Maid, and honoured by her friendship and confidence, to believe that any could be so blind as not to recognise in her a God-sent messenger, whom they would delight to follow and to honour. Yet when I walked out upon the following morning—a sunny first of May—to have a good look round at the position of the fortifications, the ring of English bastilles, the blockading towers upon the southern bank, I was quickly aware of a great deal of talk going on amongst the soldiers and the officers which was by no means favourable to the cause of the Maid.

Voices were hushed somewhat at my approach, for though none knew me, I was of course a stranger, and therefore likely to have entered the town in the train of the Maid who had yesterday made her appearance there. But I heard enough to be sure that what the Treasurer had said last evening was likely to be true. The soldiers were disposed to scoff at being led by a woman, and the officers to grumble at having had to bear all the burden of the long siege, and then when the King did send an army for the relief, to send it under the command of this Maid, who would bear away all the honour and glory which otherwise all might have shared.

From their point of view, perhaps, this discontent was not unreasonable; but as I looked upon the works around me, I marvelled how it had been possible for the English, unprotected as they must have originally been, to erect these great towers for their own shelter, and from which to batter the town with their cannon and great stone balls, when the French in great numbers and protected by strong walls, should have been able to sally forth continually and so to harass

them that the construction of such buildings should have been impossible.

The great Dunois had shown considerable acumen. He had himself destroyed all the suburbs of the town which lay without the walls, so that the English might find no shelter there, and when they had effected a lodgment on the south side of the river, he had destroyed the greater part of the bridge, thus making it impossible for the enemy to cross and take possession of the town. But he had not stopped the erection of those threatening towers circling round the city to the north, nor the construction of those still stronger blockading fortresses on the south side, Les Tourelles guarding the fragment of the broken bridge, and Les Augustins not far away. When I spoke to one grizzled old soldier about it, he shrugged his shoulders and made reply:

"What would you? Those English are helped of the Devil himself. We have tried to stand against them, but it is all to no purpose. Some demon of fighting enters into them, and they know that we shall fly—and fly we do. At last there were none who would face them. Our generals sought in vain to lead them. You should have heard La Hire swearing at them. O-hé, O-hé, he is a master of the art! Some of us would have followed him; but the rest—one might as well have asked a flock of sheep to go against the wolf, telling them they were fifty to one! Not they! It was witchcraft, or something like it. They sat still on these ramparts and watched the English working like moles or like ants, and never lifted a finger. Pouf! When men get to that they are not fit to fight. They had better go home and ply the distaff with the women."

"And let a woman come and lead their comrades to battle!" I said, laughing. "Have you seen the wonderful Maid of whom all the world is talking?"

"No; at least, I only caught a gleam of light upon her white armour last night; but as I said to the boys in the guard-room, I care not whether she be woman, witch, or angel; if she will bring back heart and courage, and make men again of all these chicken-hearted poltroons, I will follow her to the death wherever she may lead. I am sick with shame for the arms of France!"

"Bravely spoken, my friend!" I cried, giving him my hand; "and if that be the spirit of the army, I doubt not but that a few days will see such a turn in the tide of warfare as shall make the whole world stand aghast!"

"Then you believe in her?" quoth the old soldier, looking me shrewdly up and down.

"With my whole heart!" I answered, as I turned and took my way back to my quarters.

That same day the Maid held a council of war, at which all the officers of any importance were permitted to attend; and here it was that she received the first real check since she had received the King's commission and royal command.

"Let us attack the foe at once, and without delay, messires!" she said, sitting at the head of the council table, fully armed, save for her headpiece, and speaking with her clear, sweet, full tones, in which power and confidence were blended; "the Lord of Hosts is on our side. Let us go forth in His strength, and the victory will be ours."

But they listened to her in silent consternation and amaze. Here was this inexperienced girl, blind with enthusiasm, drunk with success, her head completely turned by her reception last night, actually advising an assault upon the enemy before the arrival of the army of relief, which had been forced to return to Blois to cross the river, and which could not arrive for a few more days. What madness would she next propose? Well, at least La Hire and Dunois were there to curb her folly and impetuosity. A chit of a girl like that to sit and tell them all to go forth to certain death at her command! As though they would not want all their strength to aid the relieving army to enter when it should appear! As though they were going to weaken themselves beforehand by any mad scheme of hers!

Thus the storm arose. Even La Hire, Dunois, and the Treasurer himself, were against her. As for the lesser officers, when they began to speak, they scarce knew how to contain themselves, and restrain their anger and scorn from showing itself too markedly towards one who held the King's mandate of command. And of late the Maid had always been listened to with such honour and respect! How would she bear this contradiction and veiled contempt, she who had come to assume the command of the city and its armies at the King's desire?

She sat very still and quiet at the table, as the storm hummed about her. Her clear gaze travelled from face to face as one or another of the officers rose and spoke. Sometimes a slight flush of red dyed her cheek for a moment; but never once did anger cloud her brow, or impatience or contempt mar the wonderful serenity of her beautiful eyes. Only once did she speak during the whole of the debate, after her opening words

had been delivered, and that was after a very fiery oration on the part of a youthful officer, whose words contained more veiled scorn of her and her mission than any other had dared to show. Instead of looking at him either in anger or in reproach, the Maid's own wonderful smile shone suddenly upon him as he concluded. Then she spoke:

"Captain de Gamaches, you think yourself my foe now; but that will soon be changed, and I thank you now for the brave, true service which you shall presently do for me. But meantime, beware of rashness; for victory shall not come to the city without the Maid."

He gazed at her—we all gazed at her, in amaze, not knowing what her words portended. But she gave no explanation. She only rose to her feet and said:

"Then, gentlemen, since the attack is not to be yet—not till the arrival of the relieving force, let me make the tour of the battlements, and examine the defences of the city. I would that you had faith to let me lead you forth to-day; but the time will come when I shall not have to plead with you—you will follow gladly in my wake. For the rest, it would perchance be a sorrow to my brave men, who have marched so far with me, not to partake in the victory which the Lord is about to send us; wherefore I will the more readily consent to delay, though, let me tell you, you are in the wrong to withstand the wishes of the Commander of the King's armies, and the messenger of the King of Kings."

I verily believe that she shamed them by her gentle friendliness more than she would have done by any outburst of wrath. Had she urged them now, I am not sure but what they would have given her her way; but she did not. She put her white velvet cap, with its nodding plumes, upon her head, and taking with her the chiefest of the generals and her own immediate retinue, she made the tour of the walls and defences of the city, showing such a marvellous insight into the tactics of war that she astonished all by her remarks and by her injunctions.

"I SPOKE TO ONE GRIZZLED SOLDIER, 'HAVE YOU SEEN THE WONDERFUL MAID OF WHOM ALL THE WORLD IS TALKING?'"

Suddenly, as we were walking onwards, she paused, and lifted her face with a wonderful rapt expression upon it. Then she turned to Dunois, and said with quiet authority:

"*Mon Général*, I must ask of you to take a small body of picked men, and ride forth towards Blois, and see what bechances there. I trow there is trouble among the men. Traitors are at work to daunt their hearts. Go and say that the Maid bids them fear nothing, and that they shall enter Orleans in safety. The English shall not be suffered to touch them. Go at once!"

"In broad daylight, lady, and before the very eyes of the foe?"

"Yes, yes," she answered instantly; "I will stand here and watch you. No hurt shall be done to you or to your company."

So Dunois went at her command, and we saw him and his little band ride fearlessly through the English lines; and scarce could we believe our eyes when we noted that no weapon was raised against them; not even an arrow was shot off towards them.

"She speaks the words of God. She is His messenger!" whispered the men who stood by; and her fame flew from mouth to mouth, and a strange awe fell upon all.

She was never idle during those days of waiting. She asked news of the letter she had sent to the English, and heard it had been delivered duly, though the herald had not returned. She gave commission to La Hire to demand his instant release, and this was accomplished speedily; for the bold captain, of his own initiative, vowed he would behead every prisoner they had in the city if the man were not given up at the command of the Maid. I am very sure no such act of summary vengeance would have been permitted, but the man was instantly released, and came and told us how that the letter had been read with shouts of insulting laughter, and many derisive answers suggested; none of which, however, had been dispatched, as Talbot, the chief in command of the English armies, had finally decreed that it became not his dignity to hold any parley with a witch.

And yet she could not believe that they should none of them understand that she was indeed come from God, and that they must be lamentably overthrown if they would not hear her words. On the third day of her stay in the city she caused her great white banner to be carried forth before her, and riding a white horse, clad in her silver armour, and clasping her bannerette in her hand, she rode slowly out upon the broken fragment of the bridge opposite to the tower of Les Tourelles, and begged a parley from the English general in command.

It was not Lord Talbot who came forth and stood upon his own end of the bridge, gazing haughtily across the space which divided them; but it was a notable soldier, whom the French called Classidas, though I have been told that his real name was Sir William Glassdale. To him the Maid addressed herself in her clear mellow voice, which could be heard across the flowing river:

"*Retournez de la part Dieu à Angleterre!*" was the burden of her charge, imploring him to have mercy upon himself and his soldiers, as else many hundreds of them, and himself also, must perish miserably, and perchance even without the offices of the Church.

But she was answered by roars of mocking laughter from the soldiers of the fort, and worse still, by gross insults from Classidas himself, hurled across at her from a biting tongue, which carried like the note of a trumpet.

Silently she stood and gazed at him; mournfully she turned and rode back to the town.

"May God have mercy upon their souls!" she prayed; and for the rest of the day she was sorrowful and sad.

"If it could have been done without bloodshed!" she said.

Ah, and then the day when the news came that the relieving army was in sight! Was she sad or pensive then? No! She sprang to her feet; she set down the little Charlotte, who was playing in her arms; she seized her weapons, her page flew to bring her full armour. Her horse was already in waiting; she swung upon his back. She waved her hand and called to us to rally about her.

"The English are preparing to fight!" she cried (how did she know? none had told her), but follow me, and they will strike no blow."

Already La Hire was at her side, seeking to dissuade her from leaving the shelter of the town. She smiled at him, and rode through the gate, her white banner floating in the wind.

"See yonder; that is the point of danger. We will station ourselves there, and watch our brave army march past. They shall not be hurt nor dismayed. All shall be well!"

So we rode, wondering and amazed, behind and around her, and at the appointed spot, in the very midst of the English lines, we halted, and made a great avenue for the army from Blois to pass through. All gazed in wonder at the Maid. All saluted deeply. The English in their towers gazed in amaze, but fired no shot. We all passed into the city in safety. Great God, but how would it be with our Maid when the real battle and bloodshed should begin?

(*To be continued.*)

Hints for a Christmas Entertainment.

By EVELYN SHARP.

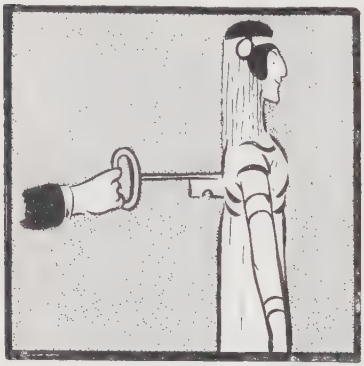
Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

THERE is nothing very original, perhaps, in the idea of a waxwork entertainment; but there is no reason why it should not be carried out with originality. The best ideas are always the old ones, provided that we give them something of a modern touch before we serve them up afresh. This has been done already with croquet, which is now quite a different game from the old-fashioned one played by our grandmothers; so why should we not also recast its contemporary diversion, Mrs. Jarley's Waxworks?

Waxworks have several points in their favour; they are as easy to get up as *tableaux vivants*, without being half so unsatisfactory when finished; they do not require many properties, and their impersonators need have no talent for acting. Very few boys and girls in their teens have the patience to learn a part, or the self-assurance to play it when learned; but anybody can wear a costume, and make a few mechanical movements over and over again, after being wound up by the showman. The figures need not even be too particular about remaining motionless while the showman discourses about them, for it adds considerably to the fun if somebody, who has just been described as having been dead for five hundred years, gives a sneeze or a giggle; besides, it offers another opportunity of being funny, to the showman.

The first thing to do is to select the characters to be impersonated. The company should be as varied as possible, for this gives the showman more chance of jumbling up his facts and his periods; the effect is also more interesting when the costumes differ a good deal from one another. Just by way of a guide, I

should suggest the following list as being likely to form an amusing gallery of waxworks:—Napoleon, Ophelia, William Tell, Joseph Chamberlain, Cleopatra, Mary Queen of Scots, Nansen, Shakespeare, Grace Darling, and the German Emperor.



WINDING UP THE WAXWORKS—CLEOPATRA READY TO DO OR DIE.

These, of course, can be added to, or changed, according to the character and resources of the performers. The costumes must be characteristic, but need not be particularly accurate; for the patter of the showman does away with any difficulty as to identification. As long as Napoleon folds his arms and wears a cocked hat, it does not matter if his military cloak is really your youngest brother's overcoat. William Tell can wear any kind of mountaineer's costume, provided that he carries a bow and arrows; Grace Darling might be dressed in blue serge like a fisher-girl, with a handkerchief tied over her hair, but she must carry a life belt, or an anchor, or an oar. Chamberlain only needs an eyeglass, and an orchid in his buttonhole, to show whom he is meant for; any sort of helmet and uniform will do for the German Emperor, though his moustache should be carefully copied from a photograph; and Shakespeare, too, could be copied from any well-known portrait—in his case, the pointed beard and the ruffle would be of greatest importance. Ophelia could wear any simple white frock, and should have wisps of straw and flowers sticking out of her hair and strewn about her dress; Cleopatra can be easily draped in a sheet, after a classic model; and Mary Queen of Scots should be in black velvet and pearls, with her well-known head-dress on her hair. It would be quite easy, too, to make a Nansen out of anybody who would endure a sufficient number of furs upon him, with bits of cotton wool here and there to give the whole an Arctic effect.

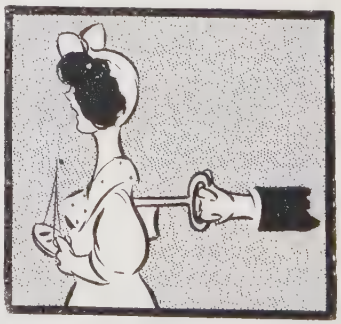
NAPOLEON AND MR. CHAMBERLAIN GET MIXED UP.

Having grouped the figures on the stage, the next thing to do is to show them off. For this purpose, a good showman, with a ready flow of language and a capacity for confusing dates and periods and incidents in an amusing manner, is essential. The success of the whole entertainment really depends upon him, for if he does his patter cleverly, the thing is sure to go with a swing. An impromptu showman can be very good fun, but he is not easy to find. Most people would prefer to learn the words beforehand; so I will give a specimen of the sort of thing that would answer the purpose in the case of the waxwork figures I have already mentioned.

We will imagine that the showman and his show are attached to a travelling caravan. If possible, he should have a big drum which he could thump occasionally, to give emphasis to his words; and as a cockney accent would add considerable colour to his part, I will suggest this as far as possible in the dialogue.

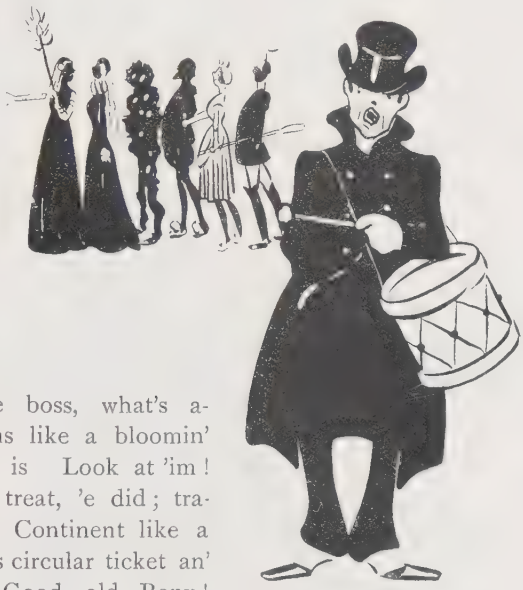
* * *

SHOWMAN (*beats drum vigorously*), *then points with a flourish of his drumstick to the waxworks*): Walk up, lidies



GRACE DARLING ABOUT TO SET OFF IN HER LIFEBOAT.

an' gen'lemen, walk up, walk up! 'Ere's the finest show of waxworks as ever lived *or* breathed. Mide of the best wax only, warranted not to run on the 'ottest summer dye! Won't crack *or* melt, not if you shove red 'ot pokers into 'em; 'ard as nuts, that's what they are. Listen, lidies an' gen'lemen *(taps one of them on the head with drumstick)*. You'd never sye as that was mide of wax, would yer now? Mide by the best bees, none of your candlegrease h'imitations! Walk up, walk up, lidies an' gen'lemen! 'Ere's the finest show of waxworks as ever lived *or* breathed!



(Points to Napoleon): This 'ere boss, what's awarming of 'is arms like a bloomin' kebby, 'e's Bony, 'e is Look at 'im! Thought hisself a treat, 'e did; travelled all over the Continent like a dook, took a Cook's circular ticket an' did hisself well. Good old Bony! Put on no end of side, doncherknow; didn't even treat his pals to a drink, not he! But he didn't git as fur as Dover, don't you think it! Funked the crossing, did Bony; didn't like the idea of trusting hisself to a South Eastern steamboat! Besides, 'e didn't want to give the show awye by pokin' 'is nose into Grite Britain; it might ha' got into the pipers as 'e was only four foot two! Then Wellington, the bloke what controls the traffic at Hyde Park Corner, did a slippy thing or two, and give Bony what for, at a plice they call Waterloo—though there ain't a station there, nor a bridge, nor nothink like Waterloo at all. So Bony was copped, an' did 'is three months 'ard like the rest of us! An' that's the end of Bony!

(Points to Ophelia): Now, this young woman 'ad a 'arrowing 'istory! Called *Or*phelia, so they tells me; an' the silly young thing went an' fell in love with Sir Ennery Irving, when he was playactin' as a cove called 'Amlet. Seed her myself, at the Lyceum Theatre—carryin' on anyhow with 'Amlet, she was! The consikence was that she went balmy—orf her nut, I *should* sye, beggin' your pardin, lidies an' gen'lemen—though she must ha' bin cracked in the fust place, *I* thinks, to go soft on a long-'aired playactor like Sir Ennery Irving. If it had bin Dan Leno, now! Anyhow, she put 'er flowin' locks into straws instead of curl pipers, and bought sixpennorth o' flowers orf a barrer, and looked a treat, she did! And the end of Orphelia was that she died in Colney 'Atch. A most unfortinate thing to 'ave 'appened!

Now, this 'ere chap with a bow an' arrers, *(pointing to William Tell)*, 'e ain't a public 'ouse sign, though 'e looks like it. 'E's Willum Tell, what lived afore you was born, and shot a apple orf of his son's 'ead—all for a twopenny ha'penny bet. The little nipper was scared to

death, 'aving seen 'is father miss a tin rabbit at two yards in the fair; so he mide up his mind to dodge that arrer. And when Willum Tell shot strite at 'is son's nose, the little nipper ducked 'is 'ead for all 'e was worth, and caught the arrer full in the apple, so to speak. And Willum, 'e won 'is bet, an' called 'is son the apple of 'is eye for evermore. Look at 'im, lidies an' gen'lemen. 'Andsome, ain't he? Mide of the best wax, and as dead as nightlights *(Whacks him with drumstick, and passes on to Chamberlain.)*

Good old Jo! 'Ere's a celebrated mawket an' that's her needle. Never 'eard of Cleopatra's needle? Garn! Ain't never bin down the Embankment, I persume? She lived in olden dyes, she did, afore rilewies an' penny 'buses; and one dye, as she was a-goin' to mend her old man's socks, she pricked 'er finger an' died. And if any lidy don't believe me, she can go to Westminster Abbey an' see the tomb of the lidy what died through pricking of 'er 'and. That's the tomb of this sime Cleopatra; and the County Council put up a moniment to 'er along the Embankment, an' called it Cleopatra's Needle.

WINDING UP THE WAXWORKS—NANSEN MAKES ADVANCES TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, WHILE THE IMMORTAL BARD GROANS IN THE BACKGROUND.

gawdner, lidies an' gen'lemen! Grows orchids for the Royal Fam'ly an' the 'Ouses of Parliament; no one can't touch him for orchids, got all the trade of the best succles, 'e 'as. Joseph Chamberlain, 'e's called; and 'e's noted for the perliteness of his langwidge, specially when dealin' in furrin tongues. See that smile on 'is gentle face? That's 'cos he's just inventin' one of his perlite little messages to the French or the Roosian Court. *'E's* mide of wax, lidies an' gen'lemen, the sorftest wax! *(Turns to Cleopatra.)*

See this old dutch with the darning needle in 'er 'and? That's Cleopatra, that is,

Passing on to the next, lidies an' gen'lemen, we comes now to a pal of Cleopatra's, called Mary Queen o' Scots. *(Points to Mary Queen of Scots.)* 'Ere she is, with a pincushion on 'er 'ead. 'Ers was a sad story, too, poor lidy! She was sent to a finishin' school in Paris, where they stuffed 'er full of extravigant notions, so to speak, which didn't suit 'er Scotch subjects at all, much as they love partin' with their saxpences. Well, well, things went from bad to wuss, as they sye, an' Mary, she got flinging the money right an' left, buying pet lambs an' silver shells an' cockleshells, and all sorts of silly nonsense, when she might

ha' spent it on whiskey and offended no one; and the end of it was that the Scotchmen lost their 'air, and Mary lost 'er 'ead and 'er pincushion afore you could sye "buttons." And after that, they found Calais engrived on 'er 'eart, which always seemed a stoopid sorter joke to me, unless she'd meant to 'ave a week-end in Paris afore they copped her!

To turn to somethink more cheerful, lidies an' gen'lemen, let me present to you the great H'arctic explorer Nansen. 'Ere you may see 'im, in the sime furs as he wore when discovering the North Pole—only he didn't discover it! Bits o' the sime ice is clingin' to 'is garments; 'e brought it back with 'im, 'cos you see 'e'd got used to 'aving it about 'im, so he ain't 'appy without it, now! Funny sort o' joker, Nansen! His ice won't melt, and 'e won't melt neither—mide of the best wax, lidies an' gen'lemen!

(*Turns to Shakespeare*): Look at Billy Shikespeare, 'im what writes the plays for Sir Ennery Irving and Mister Beerbohm Tree. They think themselves *all* right, they do, jest 'cos they kin spout what Shikespeare tells 'em to sye—but it's Billy all the time as oughter get the credit. Can't never think 'ow 'e lets hisself be put upon by them two swells; why don't 'e up and split on 'em, and sye as 'e knows a trick worth two o' theirs? Any 'ow, they'd be fairly cornered if Billy Shikespeare was to sye 'e wouldn't write no more plays for 'em. S'posin' 'e was to die! They'd look silly *then*, wouldn't they?

(*Points to Grace Darling and smiles*): Ain't she a little bit of all right? Grace Darling is her nime—Darling for short, lidies an' gen'lemen! She sived all the crew of the *Princess*

THE WAXWORKS EXCHANGE A FEW PERSONAL REMINISCENCES.

Alice, she did, in 'er own little pleasure boat as 'er dad had given her on her larst birthday. Then, orf she went to the Crimean War, and nursed the sick an' wounded Tommies; an' she's bin siving people's lives in the Serpentine, ever since!

(*Salutes German Emperor*): Last but not least, lidies an' gen'lemen, let me present to you the greatest man as ever lived on this earth—the German H'emperor. Great as he is, lidies an' gen'lemen—only look at 'im in 'is tin plate!—'e's that modest there's no doin' nothink with 'im! If you so much as mentions 'im in terms of affection and admiration in the newspipers, orf you goes to prison, double quick! As for droring a picture of 'im, that's twelve months 'ard, that is! Never knowed anyone think so little of hisself as the German H'emperor; if 'e 'appens to come over to a royal wedding, or a funeral, or any other show, there's no gettin' 'im to take a front plice. Always so retirin' he is, loves a back seat, he does, an' can't bear the sound of 'is own voice. For all that, he's the greatest man that ever lived; can't think 'ow we ever got on without 'im, myself. As for China, life wasn't worth livin', so they says over there, till they got to know the German H'emperor. Ah! he's a wonderful boss, though he won't own it. But don't *you* forget it, lidies an' gen'lemen!

An' now, lidies an' gen'lemen, 'aving told you the principal events in the lives of the illustrious blokes 'ere before you, I will now proceed to wind up the 'ole lot ov 'um.

* * * * *

A great deal of fun can be got out of the mechanical movements made by the figures when wound up. Some of them must stick in the middle of their performance and require shaking up; others can tumble down, and refuse to remain upright when the showman picks them up again, so that he is kept pretty busy all the time they are working. And they must all run down at the same moment, assuming the most ridiculous positions, just as the showman makes his bow and the curtain falls. If the few hints I have given are carefully followed out, an amateur show of waxworks ought to form a very amusing Christmas entertainment.

OUR LONGFELLOW DRAWING.

HIAWATHA is the child of Wenonah by the West Wind Mudjekewis. His mother dies in giving him birth, being deserted by her lover, and Hiawatha is brought up by his grandmother, Nokomis. He is the child of wonder, learning of the birds their secrets, of the animals their language. When he is on the verge of manhood Iagoo, the great story-teller and boaster, makes for him a bow, and sends him out into the forest to slay the famous roebuck. This encounter with the roebuck prepares him for the conflict with his father, the wily West Wind Mudjekewis. He travels day and night to the Rocky Mountains, and there beholds his sire. For three days, rushing westwards o'er the mountains, the West Wind retreats till at last he calls to Hiawatha to stop, and tells him he cannot kill the immortal, and promises him after his death to share his kingdom with him. Then towards home goes Hiawatha, forgetting the old feud. Only once he pauses on his way. He stops to purchase heads of arrows of the arrow-maker, the father of Minnehaha.

All through the time of prayer and fasting in the forest, all through the time of sailing in the cedar bark, and of his fight with the mighty Megissogwon, Hiawatha keeps thinking of the lovely Minnehaha, and notwithstanding old Nikomi's warning, he sets off for the land of the Dacotahs where she lives. He finds the maiden sitting near her father as he fashions his arrowheads, and woos and wins her. Then—

> "From the wigwam he departed,
> Leading with him Laughing Water.
> Hand in hand they went together
> Through the woodland and the meadow."

Slowly they journey together until they reach the lodge of old Nokomis. Then the wedding feast is served, and the guests tell strange adventures, "That the feast might be more joyous." The happy song grows happier, and Hiawatha remains noble through all. A terrible famine descends. Minnehaha is stricken with illness. He hunts in the wild wood, but returns to find her dying, and the light is gone from his life. Then comes the day of his departure, when—

> "On the shore stood Hiawatha,
> Turned and waved his hand at parting."

And the poem ends with words of farewell to him from all the things of nature.

GREAT-AUNT ALICIA.

A Christmas Ghost Story.

By Mrs. L. T. MEADE.

Illustrated by ALFRED PEARSE.

I HAVE always been considered matter of fact, and although my sisters and friends have suffered more or less from nerves, I have never been at all infected by this fashionable complaint. I have laughed at ghosts, have despised omens, have gone on a journey on Friday, and have even sat down boldly the thirteenth to dinner, without feeling any qualms or disquieting thoughts, or without anything untoward happening.

Why, therefore, I was the heroine of the following adventure puzzled me at the time, and puzzles me still. The things that I am about to tell happened in this fashion:

Just before Christmas in the year 1895, I received an invitation from my aunt, Lady Ingleby, to stay with her and the girls, in the old Manor House. Sir Bruce and Lady Ingleby were not only rich, handsome, and amiable, but were the possessors of one of the most beautiful old places in the north of England. Ingleby Manor was one of the show places of their county, and had been in Sir Bruce's family for many generations.

My cousins were three pretty girls, of the ages of from eighteen to twelve. There was no son to inherit the property, which was, I understood, a great grief to Sir Bruce.

I was just sixteen years old, my name was Freda Mainwaring; I was the eldest of a large family, both of boys and girls, and was seen off at Euston Station by quite a group of cheerful young folk.

"By the way, Freda," called out one of my sisters, just as the train was beginning to move out of the station, "be sure you bring us back some news of the Ingleby ghost."

I laughed, and nodded my reply. Then I ensconced myself cosily in the corner of the first-class carriage which I had selected, and gave myself up to pleasant reflections.

I arrived at Great Ingleby, the name of the station nearest to the Manor, about four o'clock. My cousins were waiting for me, and made a simultaneous rush towards me. When we met they began to kiss me vigorously.

"How nice of you to come, Freda. How glad we are to make your acquaintance at last," cried Constance, my eldest cousin.

"It is my turn now to kiss Freda, and give her a welcome," said a merry, dark-eyed little creature, all dimples and smiles. "My name is Alicia, and I am called after the ghost. And this is Patty. Patty, isn't it nice to see cousin Freda at last?"

I was delighted with one and all. They were bright, unconventional and happy. We drove quickly to Ingleby Manor.

"Here we are," cried Alicia, whose laugh was the merriest, and eyes the brightest of the three sisters. "And there is darling mother standing in the porch to welcome you. You know, of course, that you are mother's own niece. She is very glad you have come."

Lady Ingleby reminded me so much of my own mother that my whole heart went out to her, and I went up and flung my arms round her neck.

"Mother," said Connie, suddenly, "don't you think Freda is a little like——" she broke off abruptly. "Who does she remind you of, mother?"

"Why," said Lady Ingleby, "there's not a doubt of it. She is exactly like our old ancestress. I never saw such a likeness. It is most remarkable."

"And she is not even a relation," said Alicia. "I have been puzzling over it all the way home. Freda, when I sat next to you, I had quite an eerie feeling. Anyone would suppose that you were really Great-aunt Alicia come back again. Oh, how charming this is."

"Don't say anything about it, children," said the mother, laughing in her turn. "We will see whether your father notices it."

We had tea in the hall, and afterwards rambled over the house, our arms round each other's waists, and chatting and laughing as merrily as four happy girls could.

My own room, when I reached it, turned out to be a perfect paradise of beauty. It was wainscotted throughout. There was a great, wide, square bay window, round which ran a balcony. The dressing-room at one side contained the more useful part of the bedroom furniture, while the sleeping room, but for the pretty rose-coloured bed, might have been a lady's boudoir.

The girls and I chatted together for a little, then, telling me that they would send Hortense, their French maid, to help me to dress, they left me.

They had scarcely done so before there came a tap at the door, and Alicia, her eyes full of laughter, and cheeks rosy, dashed in.

"Put this on, won't you?" she said.

"What is it?" I asked.

"You are so ridiculously like Great-aunt Alicia, that we want you to complete it by wearing her dress. This really belonged to her. Oh do, do put it on. Hortense shall help you. She will pile your hair on the top of your head, and make you look as if Great-aunt Alicia had stepped down out of her picture frame. It will be such fun to watch father's face."

I could not help yielding to the merry girl's wish, and when Hortense entered she also seemed to appreciate the joke.

"Mees is vair like the beautiful lady in the picture. Mees has just the same features."

I laughed. She and I consulted together. She piled up my hair in imitation of a bygone mode, then she twisted some strings of pearls through its dark coils; finally I stepped into the rose-coloured brocade, and put on rose-coloured satin shoes, with very high heels. The dress was open in front, and the sleeves fell away at the elbows. It had a long train, and I felt that I looked more graceful than I had ever done before in my life.

"Now Mees shall behold herself," cried Hortense.

She led me to the glass, and as I stared at myself I heard a giggling sound outside the door, and the three girls ran in.

"Oh! Did you ever?" cried Constance.

"Alicia, your candle is extinguished for ever," exclaimed Patty.

"Grant us a boon, Great-aunt Alicia—a boon!" exclaimed each in turn, and they dropped on one knee before me and clasped their hands and looked up with roguish eyes.

"Now, I tell you what," said Constance. "Before Freda goes downstairs she must inspect herself in the picture gallery. It is the only place we have not taken her to. Come," she added, "we shall have plenty of time."

We entered the picture gallery, which was in a distant part of the house, and, strange to say, unlike the rest of the old mansion, was not lighted by electricity.

"Father has a prejudice against it," said Alicia. "He says the ancestors would not like it."

Her face grew suddenly sober as we passed in almost darkness between the long line of great dames and men-at-arms. Alicia carried the candle, and presently, holding it high, she paused before a painting of a tall, slender girl, who wore a rose-coloured brocade, and pearls in her black hair. She was standing with her hands lightly clasped, and her bright dark eyes gazing straight out of the picture. I could see for myself that she and I had feature for feature the same; but there was a look of melancholy, and even pain in her eyes which mine certainly lacked.

"It is the same, isn't it," said Constance. "But how sad she looks. She is always sad, but she looks more distressed than ever to-night. Poor darling! What can ail her? Come Freda, don't look at her any more or you will be getting the same woebegone expression."

I was glad to turn away. For the first time in my life a curious eerie, nervous sensation had visited me. It was as though something chilled me. A moment before I was all fun and laughter. Now I could not laugh, and I had no sense of fun. I felt a great wish to take off the dress which Great-aunt Alicia used to wear, but I did not like to say anything of

my feelings. The girls were still in the highest spirits. We went downstairs.

"We are to dine with father and mother to-night," said Constance. "There are a good many visitors, but our special friends don't come until to-morrow. Come, Freda, mother is so anxious to show you to father. Come, this is the drawing-room."

We entered a magnificent apartment, the walls lined with soft pale blue satin, and the whole place ablaze with firelight, waxlight, and mirrors. It was another of Sir Bruce's eccentricities that the stately old drawing-room was not to be modernised with electric light.

We walked up the room two and two. Sir Bruce, whom I had never seen, was standing on the hearthrug. He was a tall, thin man, with an anxious somewhat peevish face, and piercing dark eyes. He gave a perceptible start when he saw me, and was about to leave the room, when Connie ran up to him.

"Ah! Dad," she said. "You thought it was really our great ancestress herself. Have we not done it well? This is not a ghost, it is our cousin, Freda Mainwaring. Is she not very like Great-aunt Alicia? Mother saw the likeness the moment she arrived. So we just put her into this dress to carry out the idea. Isn't it fun?"

"I don't see the fun, Constance. It is, in my opinion, a senseless joke," was Sir Bruce's reply.

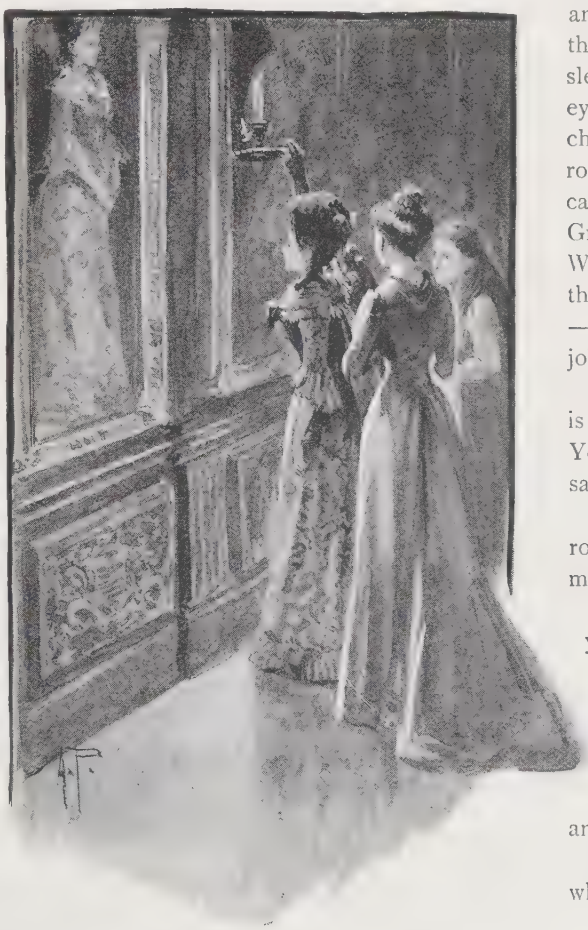
He recovered himself on the instant, however, and coming forward, shook me warmly by the hand. He made no remark with regard to the likeness between his ancestress and me.

"He doesn't like it," I whispered to Connie. "What a pity you made me put on the dress."

"Oh, it can't be helped now, and he doesn't really mind," replied Connie.

She crossed the room, and I followed her. There were a good many visitors present, and just at that moment several fresh people came in. Sir Bruce and my aunt were busy talking to them, and an old lady, with snow-white hair, wearing some lovely diamonds, crossed the room to sit near the fire.

As she did so, I followed her with my eyes. Standing close to her, so near that she might have put out her hand and touched her on the shoulder, was a slender girl, with dark eyes, and a melancholy face, wearing rose-coloured brocade—the dress of Great-aunt Alicia. Who was she? Was this a practical joke—another practical joke?



"ALICIA CARRIED THE CANDLE, AND HOLDING IT HIGH SHE PAUSED BEFORE A PAINTING OF A TALL SLENDER GIRL." (p. 258).

"What in the world is the matter, Freda? You look so startled," said little Alicia.

She came up the room and touched me.

"You didn't say—you didn't tell me that *another* girl would be here to-night, wearing rose-coloured brocade." I answered.

Alicia turned very white.

"Do you see anyone?" she asked.

"Yes, there, close to the old lady."

"Don't notice it," said Alicia in a low whisper. "I will explain presently. Oh, it's all right."

"But isn't there such a person in the room?"

"No, no! What nonsense! You must be very imaginative or very tired."

"I am neither, and I do see her just there. Oh, no, she has gone."

"Please don't speak of it to anyone?"

"But why shouldn't I? She must be a real lady; I don't believe in ghosts."

"Don't speak of it," cried Alicia again. "Don't breathe it. I will tell you presently; but not another word now."

During the evening several people remarked on my quaint dress, and one adventurous lady suggested that we should all pay a visit to the picture gallery, in order to compare me with the original lady. Connie and Patty were eager to do so, but Alicia refused.

"Not to-night," she said. "We can't half see the lady by candle-light. We'll go in the morning."

This was agreed upon, and by and by the party broke up for the night.

"I'll follow you to your room presently, Freda," said Alicia.

I went there. It certainly was a sweet little room, and the crackling of the fire and the bright light made by the electric burners would have put any timid girl's heart at rest. Nevertheless, I was anxious to take off the old brocade, and I tried not to think of the tall girl who had stood silent and full of sorrow in one corner of the gay drawing-room. Presently Alicia came in.

"I know you are startled," she said, "and I am going to sleep with you to-night. You need not be at all frightened. She never does anything. She is the sweetest, dearest ghost in all the world. People have seen her now and again. I never have, nor has Connie, nor Patty; but one or two have. You were very brave. You don't mind, do you?"

"No," I answered. "I certainly did not see a ghost. I should not believe such a thing possible for one moment."

"Then what did you see?"

"I don't know."

Alicia laughed.

"Come," she said then, "that is scarcely an answer I should expect from a girl so highly educated as you are said to be, Freda. But let us talk of something else. Perhaps she came on account of your likeness to her. If your souls are as like as your bodies, you two must have a great deal in common. But don't let us talk of it any more. I am so tired; I shall be asleep in a moment."

She was, and I am bound to say that, notwithstanding that marvellous apparition in the drawing-room, I quickly followed her example.

When I awoke next morning the winter sun was stealing into the room, and Alicia assured me that it was between eight and nine o'clock.

We both got up, and when we all met at breakfast I began to feel that I must have been the victim of a fit of indigestion, or something equally commonplace, when I saw the lady in the rose-coloured brocade. Nevertheless, all during the day I had a strange feeling—an earnest desire that night would not come too soon. I began also to count the days that I should be obliged to spend at Ingleby Manor, and to wish for the time when I could return to my own unromantic and unghostly home in London.

Nothing was said of Great-aunt Alicia, and little Alicia, her namesake, did not again allude to the subject. We were all busy preparing for the arrival of the young people, who were expected that night.

"We shall have a very gay time," the girls assured me, and they talked of their cousins and friends, and told me so much about them, that I also longed to see them. In the course of the morning I wrote a long letter to mother, but did not allude to Great-aunt Alicia.

The young people put in their appearance all in good time, and from that moment the fun and laughter, the jests, the music, the song, the dancing and gaiety followed each other in a perfect stream of pleasure. We none of us had any time to spare for thoughts of those long passed away.

At last there came the evening before I was to leave Ingleby Manor. The young guests had departed before me. I was the last to go. The pleasantest visit of my life had come to an end. Connie, Alicia and Patty nearly wept

when they spoke of my departure, and we made many schemes for meeting again in London or elsewhere.

On that last day, while I was waiting for the girls, who happened to be busy in different ways, it suddenly occurred to me that I would visit the picture gallery once again. I went there alone, softly closing the old baize-covered door behind me. The gallery was in the oldest wing of the house. I had already been told that this part of Ingleby Manor was two or three hundred years older than the part which was now occupied. At the end of the gallery by which I had entered was a huge black oak trunk, which doubtless contained the brocade dress that I had worn on the night of my arrival. I turned to examine the trunk, and felt a curious and very keen desire to lift the lid, and to look on the garments of those who had passed away. The girls had told me that this trunk was full of the rarest curiosities. There were helmets therein, plumed hats, Spanish mantillas, doublets, and hose. Also all kinds of women's apparel, stately brocades, hooped petticoats, rare old stomachers, curious necklets, head-dresses of varied and quaint devices. Once the ancestors, their wives and daughters had worn these treasures. They were considered very sacred by the family, and Sir Bruce had long ago made a stipulation that they were not to be used for theatricals or any other commonplace purpose.

With a great effort I tried to lift the lid of the trunk. For a time I could not stir it. Then, as I pressed and pushed, it suddenly sprang open. I had evidently touched a spring. I bent down and gazed at the dazzling and beautiful contents.

Lying on the top of the other treasures was the rose-coloured brocade dress of the lady whose likeness I was supposed to be. I took it up and examined it reverently.

"Poor, pretty, beautiful lady," I said aloud, and I raised the brocade to my lips and kissed it with a sudden sense of affection. As I did so I fancied I heard a sort of moan close to my ear. It did not frighten me, but it impressed me. I lost all desire to examine further the contents of the oak chest. I dropped the lid into its place and began my peregrinations round the gallery. The portraits were all by old masters. There were several by the great Van Dyck, others by Romney, and, of course, not a few by Sir Joshua Reynolds. There was also a celebrated and enormously valuable Gainsborough. My lady's likeness was painted by Romney, and a most lovely and beautiful picture he had made. I stood for a long time looking at it. I could scarcely tear myself away. It seemed to me that as I gazed the eyes brightened and deepened, and grew full of life, and the rosy lips seemed to move, and I almost fancied that the lady meant to come right down out of her canvas and beckon to me to tell me the reason why her eyes were so sad. I was not frightened—I was deeply interested, and I looked boldly up at her and said:

"Poor, lovely lady. I do pity you, and I wish with all my heart that I could help you."

As I left the gallery I was met by my cousins. They asked me at once if I had gone to look at the picture.

"Did you go all by yourself?" asked little Patty. "And weren't you frightened, Freda?"

"No," I answered. "Why should I be frightened?"

"Did you stare very hard at Great-aunt Alicia?"

"Yes," I replied. "I feel that I love her, and I only wish she were my ancestress."

"Poor thing," said Alicia. "No one quite knows her story; but there is a legend about her, and the legend says that the person who will put things right for Great-aunt Alicia will be one who is no relation. Perhaps, Freda, you are the one."

"What do you mean?" I asked, and a cold sensation passed over me.

"Oh, I am only joking. You look quite chilled. Come to the fire and warm yourself."

Amongst the many friends I had made at Ingleby Manor there was no one whom I liked better than my stern-looking uncle Bruce. He had evidently taken a great fancy to me, and I often went with him into his study. He was a very keen naturalist, and was fond of making all sorts of collections. I never saw a more splendid set of British butterflies than he had in several cases.

On this particular evening he asked me to go with him into the study, and he and I began our favourite talk about the beauties of the butterfly, the best way of collecting them, and of saving them when collected, etc.

As we talked together, I was suddenly struck by an indefinable likeness in his piercing dark eyes, and then I perceived that he had a close resemblance to Great-aunt Alicia. Just as this knowledge came to me, I raised my eyes, and looking across the room saw, standing between the door and an old cabinet, the lady herself. There was only a faint manifestation of her, but she was certainly there. Her hand was slightly raised in a warning attitude, and her very dark and troubled eyes were fixed on my face. The whole expression of her face seemed to say:

"Don't betray me. Make a great effort to retain your self-control."

I did make an effort, but I am certain that my voice shook, and that my face turned white.

Uncle Bruce looked up at me in astonishment.

"What are you looking at, Freda?" he asked.

I shut my eyes as he spoke.

"I am feeling a little tired and faint," I said. "May I go to bed early?"

"Certainly," he replied. He locked up the cases of butterflies, and we returned to the drawing-room.

That night, as my cousins and I stood on the landing where our rooms were situated, little Alicia said to me:

"Will you have me as your bed-fellow, Freda?"

"Not to-night," I replied.

"Why not? You look—oh, I can't tell you how you look, but you trouble me."

As she spoke she ran up and kissed me.

"I am so fond of you, Cousin Freda," she said. "Indeed, we all love you very dearly. There is something very tall and stately about you. You look as if you could never be afraid of anything. You look brave enough to undergo any shock?"

"Why do you say that?" I asked.

"It is only because of the look in your eyes. You might be an Ingleby yourself, you are so like Great-aunt Alicia. Oh, dear, now you have turned pale. May I sleep with you? I believe that after all you are human, and that you will be a little lonely."

"No, I shall not," I answered. "I would rather be alone. Good-night, Alicia darling. Good-night."

I ran off. My room was at the further end of the corridor belonging to the new part of the house, and was thoroughly modern.

Now, it so happened that there never was any girl, perhaps in all the world, more desirous to have a companion that night than I, Freda Mainwaring. I was amazed at myself when I declined Alicia's request, but the fact is that I could not help doing so. Something quite outside myself seemed to compel me.

When I entered my room Hortense came as usual to assist me. I told her that I should not need her services. She said she would come in early in the morning to complete packing my trunk, and, dropping a pretty French curtsey she left the room.

I was alone. I took off my white dress, and put on a dressing-gown. Then I seated myself by the fire and began brushing my hair. My hair was very long and thick, and black like a raven's wing. It was exactly the colour of Great-aunt Alicia's in the portrait.

Presently, feeling tired, I lay back in my chair and closed my eyes for an instant to think over what had occurred that day. Although I was tired, I was not conscious of being at all sleepy, and presently I opened my eyes and gazed into the fire. It was blazing up merrily. I felt my heart beat very fast, and although all trace of fear had left me I was certain something was going to happen. The next instant, a faint sigh in my ears told me that I was right. My sense of expectancy grew greater and greater. I was glad to be alone, I no longer wanted a companion. Again I heard a sigh. It seemed to come from the air. I rose from my seat and stood facing the door.

I saw the door softly open, and a figure slowly, silently entered. It was a girl, tall and slender, and dressed in rose-coloured brocade. For a moment she stood near the door, her eyes, with a world of meaning in them, fixed on mine.

"Oh, don't be afraid," her eyes seemed to say. "If you are frightened, if you scream out, I must go away. Oh, do, do understand the importance of keeping your self-control."

I said with my eyes, although I uttered no word:

"I will. You are too sweet, too pretty, too sad to hurt anyone. I am not afraid. I am glad to meet you."

As these thoughts spoke to the lady's eyes out of my eyes, I came a step or two towards her. The lady took a step nearer to me. When I paused, she paused. Her eyes were very wide open, and the beseeching, entreating look in them was more marked than ever. When she came within a few feet of me she beckoned with her finger. I went towards her. She at the same time advanced towards me. We both paused when only one little foot of space divided us.

"I am sorry for you," I then said. I spoke aloud, but my voice was very faint and low, and unlike itself. "Is there anything I can do for you?"

I was amazed at my own words, As I spoke them the most extraordinary change came over her face. All the sadness went out of it. It rippled over with the sweetest smile I had ever seen in my life. Never before, and never since have I seen a smile like that. It belonged to a world other than ours.

After a pause the lady spoke.

"Thank you. I hoped you would be brave enough. You have released me."

"How do you mean?" I asked.

"For two hundred years I have been waiting," she said. "For two hundred long years I have been wandering in and out of these rooms. My release could never come until some one brave like you spoke to me. To all appearance I was safely tied up in the canvas which contained my portrait. But night after night I wandered forth, always looking for some one like yourself. The people who came to live in this house were no use. Many strangers came, and a few I tried—oh, slightly, with just a shadowy presentation of myself. You bore that presentation well. The third time you are bearing it so well that you are not afraid at all."

"You are right, Great-aunt Alicia," I said. "I am not frightened at all."

"Then I shall be released. My wanderings will cease. I can go to my own place."

"And that?" I asked.

She did not answer, except with another smile of such radiance that it brought tears into my eyes.

"What can I do for you?" I asked.

"Follow me," she answered.

Just for a moment I had a curious sense of repugnance; but whatever happened I would not fail the poor ghost now.

She walked on in front, and I came after her. As I proceeded down the passages and then down the front stairs, it seemed to me that where we moved the air grew cold. She had no candle, nor had I. She needed no light. Down many corridors did I follow her. At last we reached my uncle's study.

This room was lighted, as a rule, with elec-

"GREAT-AUNT ALICIA NEEDED NO LIGHT. DOWN MANY CORRIDORS DID I FOLLOW HER."

tricity, and I approached the wall now to switch on the current. But the ghost waved her hand.

"The moon gives us light enough," she said.

I felt still colder and still more chill. I was also weak and exhausted; but fear, I had none, for the lady was so beautiful, with a beauty not of earth. I could see her slender form. All the details of her delicate figure, and the soft outlines of her face were clearly portrayed. She had quantities of raven black hair, and it was piled high on her head. Each of her movements was fraught with an old-world grace: I had never seen anyone like her before.

She crossed the old library, which was panelled from ceiling to floor. Suddenly she stopped near the great ingle nook. She pointed to one of the panels.

"Tell Sir Bruce Ingleby to open this, and ask him to burn what he finds within. See that he never reads it, see that he burns it unread."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"There is a manuscript within which tells the story of a sin," she replied. "The story was told in the confessional to a priest of this house two hundred and fifty years ago. The manuscript which contained the particulars was given to the priest with directions that he was to destroy them. He neglected to have this done. When he was dying he asked me to see to it. I was his niece. I meant to, but I was to be married immediately and I forgot my promise in the joy which lay before me. I never married, for my lover was killed on the morning of our wedding day. I died soon afterwards from the shock. Thus my uncle's command was never executed. Since then it has been my punishment to walk this house until I could find some one brave enough to listen to my story, in order to get the manuscript burnt. If it were read it would affect the lives of many people in a dangerous and disastrous way. When it is burnt the sin is annulled, and all is safe. I shall know it, I shall know that you have succeeded, for at that moment my release will come. Farewell, brave girl, may you, in your hour of need, find as true a friend."

I saw her receding farther and farther away, until at last she went out by the door and was gone. I turned to walk feebly back to my own room. As I did so I stumbled against something. I opened by eyes with a start. The whole thing was a dream. I was still seated in my chair by the fire. The fire was nearly out. I was trembling all over, chilled to the bone, nervous, frightened at last.

I started up and began to pace the room.

"Oh, why was it a dream?" I kept saying to myself. "Why can't I really see her and hear her speak. Oh, beautiful lady, you must be somewhere. I am certain it was more than a dream."

* * * * *

Strange to say, Sir Bruce and I found the parchment. As his eyes fell upon the lettering, a look of great excitement filled his face. I snatched it away from him and threw it into the fire. I pressed it down myself and saw it burn. Then, as the flame ascended and the parchment disappeared, the sun came out in a bright ray, and the whole landscape became full of a wonderful winter glory. There was something fresh and sparkling in the air.

I kissed uncle Bruce and ran out of the room.

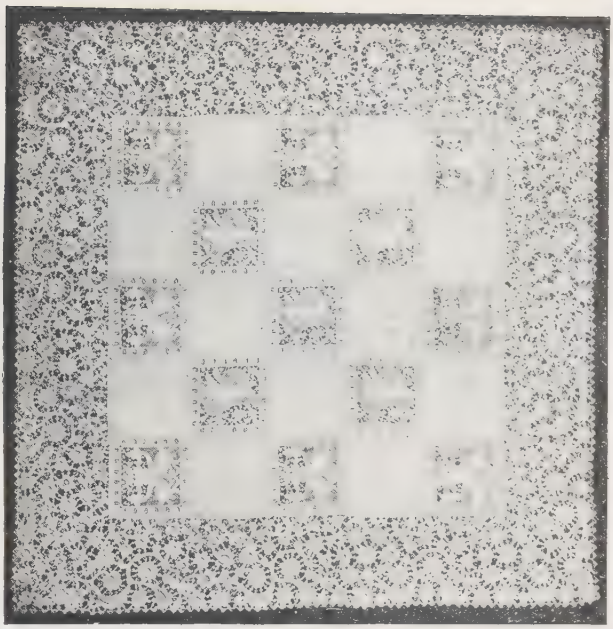
New Designs in Venetian Point Lace.

By SARA HADLEY.

VENETIAN point lace differs from Royal Battenberg and other laces in that it is worked on the right side of the pattern, instead of the reverse side, and because there are no braids used in its construction.

The work also proceeds from left to right after the manner in which a picture is drawn, as will be seen by a reference to the illustrations on this page.

The working detail of Venetian point is shown in illustration. The pattern is drawn on muslin, which, in turn, is basted on a heavier material, and outlined with heavy linen thread and heavier cord, which add raised effects to the pattern, and are buttonholed over very closely, thus giving a solid foundation for developing the numerous fine stitches which are worked in very closely together.



A SQUARE TABLE-COVER.

TWO DAINTY DESIGNS IN POINT LACE OF FINGER-BOWL D'OYLYS.

The background is what may be termed open coral work or buttonhole bars. This, by contrast, shows off the finely stitched design proper, as will be seen in the square table-cover shown in the accompanying illustration.

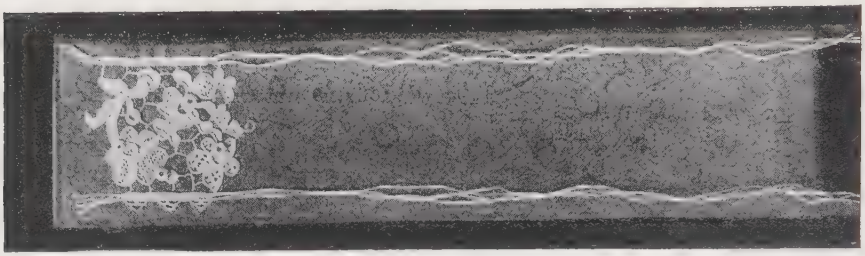
A SINGLE SQUARE OF TABLE-COVER.

The materials required are three sizes of thread and a heavier cord—the largest thread and heavier cord being used for outlining the pattern. For the coral work or buttonhole bars the mediu thread needed, while the lightest of the threads is used for the fine stitches. Pointless needles are used in making the lace.

Linen of the best quality is essential, as to use inferior material would not, considering the time and care involved in the work, serve any purpose. Venetian point is eminently fitted for the development of church laces because of its firmness, the detail of its designs and its general sumptuous effect. Collars,

stoles and other portions of vestments are seen in this beautiful lace.

The table cover shown in illustration is not only an exquisite specimen of needle-craft but in making it an heirloom may be created; for upon each square of the deep cream-tinted, hand-spun linen used in alternation with the lace squares, may be embroidered the initials or monogram of a member of the family, together with the date.



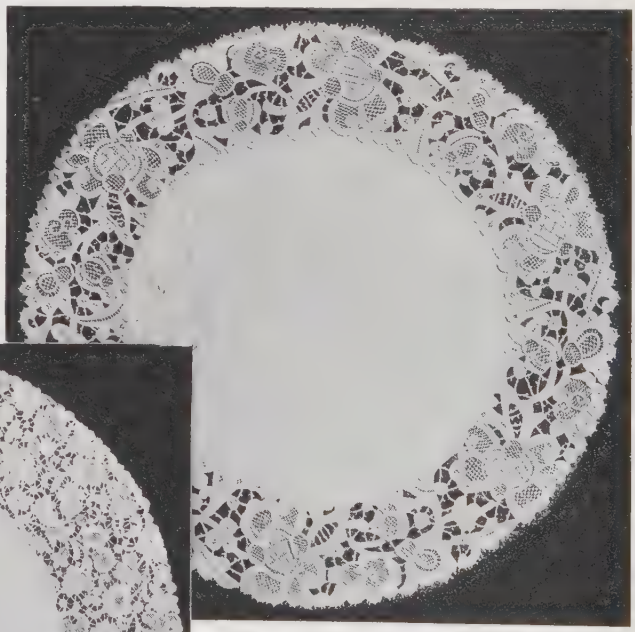
A WORKING DETAIL OF VENETIAN POINT LACE.

The squares of lace are in two designs, each of ancient idea, and, if desired, a border, introducing the same designs may be arranged.

It will be observed that in arranging the squares the triton squares are five in number and all arranged at the centre, where they alternate with four squares of the linen. The griffin or dragon squares, also alternated with the linen blocks, enclose the triton squares, thus providing a symmetry and harmony of design.

In designing a border as above suggested, griffins or tritons could be worked out at the corners and at the centre of each side.

In making Venetian point it is imperative to use the characteristic close stitch seen in the figure at the centre of the square shown in illustration. This stitch is so closely wrought that it resembles a woven fabric, and makes the figure appear as if appliquéd. The background is the genuine Venetian stitch and is a remarkable imitation of net. So perfect is this imitation that even one versed in the mysteries of lace working is, at a first glance, confused as to its exact method of development.



A CENTREPIECE WITH A LINEN CENTRE.

A CENTREPIECE FOR A POLISHED TABLE.

In the borders to the centrepieces and d'oylys, and in the "all-over" d'oyly, the floral designs are filled in with fancy stitches of various kinds. The thick portions must be made after the manner of the figure at the centre of the square.

Both of the centrepieces and one finger-bowl d'oyly have centres of fine white hand-spun linen and a border of Venetian point. The all-over Venetian point finger-bowl d'oyly is made with cream-tinted materials.

A Happy New Year.

THE blithest of years to you, sweet little maiden—
The blithest of years to you, brave little lad,
May it come to you with happiness laden,
With peace and contentment its aspect be glad!
"A happy new year to you," joy bells are ringing—
"A happy new year to you, children," they say;
New hope and new courage their voices are bringing,
Enough for the journey commencing to-day.

Listen—o'er valley and hill they are blowing,
Those musical voices of silver-tongued bells:
"All blessings come to you of Heaven's bestowing"—
Peals the glad cadence as o'er you it swells!
Listen—o'er city and street they are calling,
Borne on the wings of the fresh morning air—
"A happy new year to you," rising and falling,
As if they were climbing the angel's bright stair.

Work well, and play well, be helpful to others,
Sweet little maiden and brave little lad,
Stretching kind hands to the sisters and brothers,
Who journey beside you, and making them glad.
Put your whole hearts into each little duty,
Fret not at hardships, but be of good cheer,
A year truly lived is a year full of beauty—
Your own will can make it "A *happy* new year!"

HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

JUNIOR GIRLS AT DRILL.

Famous Girls' Schools.

XII.—THE MARY DATCHELOR SCHOOL.

By CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

Illustrated from photographs by Russell and Sons, Wimbledon.

In the healthy suburb of Camberwell, in London, just near enough the centre of things to be convenient, and far enough from the city to experience fresh air and sunshine, the Mary Datchelor School provides education at a moderate fee for some 450 girls. The tale of its endowment—how a small yearly sum was left two centuries ago by one Mary Datchelor for very different purposes than the ultimate endowment of a huge school for girls—makes a story by itself. I include it as it was given to me by Miss Rigg, the Head Mistress of the School.

The School takes its name from Mistress Mary Datchelor, one of three daughters of Matthias Datchelor, and Mary his wife, who resided, before and after the Great Fire of London, within the united parishes of St. Andrew Undershaft (under the shaft, or maypole, set up each May Day) and St. Mary the Virgin or St. Mary-at-the-Axe. Both parishes have for a long time past been designated as St. Andrew Undershaft, and the fine old church thus named stands in St. Mary Axe, in the Lime Street Ward of the City of London, at the eastern end of the city.

Mary Datchelor (who never married), after she removed to Haydon Yard, in the parish of Holy Trinity, Minories, continued to attend her own parish church of St. Andrew, one of the few city churches that had escaped destruction in the Great Fire.

She was buried in a vault at the tower end of the church, and on her death her house in Threadneedle Street—known successively as the Dutch Coffee-House, the Antigallican Coffee-House, the Cock Tavern, and the North British Insurance Office—was conveyed to the rector and churchwardens, for the purpose of providing funds for maintaining her tomb, paying for a sermon each New Year's Day, distributing certain doles, and educating and

apprenticing two boys belonging to her native parish. The gift originally made was but small, but with the marvellous increase in value which belongs to all City property, the bequest became in the course of 200 years of such worth, that out of the funds that had accumulated, the Mary Datchelor School for Girls was founded, at a final cost for land, buildings, furnishing, etc., etc., of some £32,000.

The school was established under a scheme of the Charity Commission, or, as it used to be called, the Endowed Schools Commission. Mary Datchelor's ambition was limited to giving a thorough education and equipment for life to two boys; but the property she left, in the course of two centuries, increased in monetary value some three hundred per cent., and has been the means of endowing a school for 450 girls.

IN THE LABORATORY: SOME MARY DATCHELOR GIRLS BUSY MAKING EXPERIMENTS IN SCIENCE.

It was found unadvisable to establish the school in the City, although the funds for it came from thence. A suburb within easy reach of most parts of South London was determined on. It so happened that nearly six centuries ago the estates of Isolda, daughter of Robert de Camerwelle (Camberwell), were presented to the parish of St. Andrew Undershaft, to its great enrichment. So it was determined to give back to Camberwell, as it were, something of that which had come from Camberwell to the City parish in which Mary Datchelor had lived. A suitable estate was found for purchase—a fine old house, standing in a beautiful garden, full of lovely old trees and flowering shrubs, lying between Camberwell Grove and Grove Lane, close to Church Street and to the old church of St. Giles—one of the most beautiful of Gilbert Scott's erections. Here, in January, 1877, the Datchelor School was opened.

Miss Rigg, who was appointed Head Mistress in that year, and has remained at the head of things ever since, tells me that in January, 1895, the School was reconstituted under a new governing body. At that time it was taken over by the Clothworkers' Company of the City of London. They administer the property, and subsidise the School to a very considerable extent out of their corporate funds.

The old house in which the School originally started, in the course of three years became much too small for the number of scholars who presented themselves. Finally, the present large and commodious School was erected, and the old School used for the junior divisions. The new part possesses an adequate number of well-lighted class-rooms, a large dining-hall, in which some hundreds of girls meet for lunch and dinner every day, also an exceptionally commodious hall where concerts, speeches, and entertainments are delivered, and in which

the pupils assemble every day for prayers. Probably few schools own a hall of its dimensions. A large fresco painting, illustrative of girl-life in the days of frills and polonaises, occupies the entire width of the wall space behind the platform. It is the work of Mrs. Osman-Thomas, who has been drawing-mistress since soon after the School opened. A portrait of Miss Rigg by Ralph Peacock is conspicuous in its place of honour on the right. The names of girls of the School who have distinguished themselves are inscribed on the two sides of the wall.

Upstairs two well-equipped laboratories for chemistry and physics are included amongst the class-rooms. The smaller of these has been added quite recently. Outside, one of the old houses of Camberwell serves as a music house.

Near the music house, and to bring the School quite up to date, a gymnasium proper is being erected. Drill has up to now taken place in one or other of the two halls of the School. A studio is also being erected adjacent to the gymnasium.

The conspicuous benefits of the training to be had in the Mary Datchelor School would seem to lie in the completeness of its full curriculum. Children may go in to the kindergarten, and through the course of years emerge fully-equipped teachers. In connection with the Mary Datchelor School there is a Training College for Teachers, and as the kindergarten leads up to the School proper, so the School leads into the Training College.

The benefits of such complete facilities for going on with learning when most girls—often to their regret—leave off, are becoming every day more evident. Whether a girl intends to make a teacher of herself or not, the chance of having classes to attend after school days are generally supposed to be over is one which

THE GRAND HALL OF THE MARY DATCHELOR SCHOOL.
Senior Classes listening to a lecture.

THE MUSEUM OF THE MARY DATCHELOR SCHOOL.

In which are rare geological and botanical specimens, and an interesting collection of dolls, dressed to represent the Canterbury Pilgrims, by the girls of the School.

would be of superlative use to very many people.

As for those who want to train as teachers, the fact that Miss Rigg's present staff is largely composed of former pupils testifies to the advantages gained already from the Mary Datchelor system of training.

Classes are specially arranged besides in certain subjects for advanced pupils, so that girls of seventeen or so may take one or more without having to go in for the whole course of study. Chief among these I would mention a class for millinery and dressmaking, where girls learn to make their own hats and clothes. Students bring their own materials, and work is done at home between lessons. Students in these classes are prepared for the City and Guilds Examinations in Millinery and Dressmaking.

Probably few schools offer such an amount of encouragement in the way of scholarships and leaving exhibitions as does the Mary Datchelor School. There are twenty-five Entrance Scholarships, which are tenable for five years. They entitle the holders to free tuition in the School for that period, each Scholarship being worth £48 15s. Ten of these Scholarships are appointed to London County Council junior scholars from public elementary schools.

Besides these Entrance Scholarships, the Company have instituted nine new Scholarships, called "Clothworkers' Junior Scholarships." These Scholarships, worth £29 5s., entitle the holders to free tuition in the School for three years. Candidates for these must have been in the School not less than two years.

Then there are six "Datchelor Scholarships,"

three of which are awarded each year, and which are tenable for two years; one "Coventry Scholarship" and a "Clothworkers' Senior Scholarship," each awarded annually, and tenable for one year. Six Leaving Exhibitions, which entitle the holders to free training in the Datchelor Training College for two years, are awarded in a set of three annually, and provide for preparation for the Cambridge and London University Examinations for Teachers.

In the event of any girl proving of exceptional merit and ability, and being at the same time anxious to obtain a University training, the Governors give an Exhibition of £50, tenable for three years, subject to an extension of four years in the case of Honours Candidates, for training at Girton, Newnham, or Somerville Colleges.

In connection with the Training College, the Governors of the Datchelor School have also provided an annual free Studentship. The Studentship gives free training for one year, and preparation for the examinations of the Cambridge Teachers' Training Syndicate, together with residence for one year at Datchelor House. Candidates must be intending to make teaching their profession, and be either graduates of some British University, or have taken Honours at Oxford or Cambridge.

I detail these particulars of the Datchelor Scholarships in order to show what very complete provision is made for, and encouragement given to, girls who study in all seriousness, either in the School or out of it.

The Training School, though a natural and almost necessary outgrowth of the School proper, is an institution in itself, and has been singularly successful. Few colleges of its kind can offer such pleasant and helpful surroundings for the study and practice of teaching. For students in residence Datchelor House has been provided by the Clothworkers' Company, and is presided over by Miss Carpenter, the College Mistress of Method. It is seven minutes' walk from the College, situated on a high and pleasant spot on Denmark Hill. Originally a mansion house, its fine old gardens spread invitingly back from a pretty tennis lawn. Mulberry and walnut trees grow there, and three wide windows open out on to the lawn from a long, low drawing room. Inside everything is pleasant and quiet and comfortable, offering the best conditions for study and restfulness after a hard day's work.

So many pupils travel from considerable distances to the School proper, that not only are daily meals provided, in the huge dining hall of the School, but Miss Rigg has made arrangements for securing proper boarding accommodation for those pupils who may desire it. Miss Stephan—one of the mistresses—is therefore at the head of a boarding house which has been recently opened for this purpose.

Miss Rigg informs me that up till 1887 the School went on in a very even and uneventful manner. But in that year and the two following, several important things happened to enlarge the interest of pupils in the School, and to help towards its present very pleasant reputation. A School Magazine was then started, which ever since has been upheld with success.

In 1887 the School Museum was founded. It forms a pleasing corner of the School, and is well stocked with something besides the geological and botanical specimens usually found in museums. Girls give anything they may happen to acquire which is at all rare, and regarding

DATCHELOR HOUSE.

The residence of Students of the Training College, attached to the Mary Datchelor School.

which they feel unselfish. In the centre of the room, in a case by themselves, is a curious assortment of miniature figures on mules and horseback. It is "The Canterbury Pilgrims," dressed according to the Chaucer Traditions, from descriptions in the Prologue, and the Ellesmere Manuscripts. Some of the Datchelor pupils are responsible for this quaint collection: one class of girls having dressed the dolls and completed the pilgrims' outfit themselves.

In this same year of 1887, a fund was started in the School for decorating the class-rooms. As a consequence, the walls in the present day are hung with pictures presented by the girls of former years, and these are always being added to. So that it must be a pleasant matter for old girls to come back to the school and see some remembrance of their school days which has not been covered up or effaced by the march of time. Flowers and plants are like wise looked to by the girls, a small sum being contributed by most of them monthly towards the up-keep of these.

In 1888 a tennis club was formed, which is taken full advantage of up to the present time. The playground admits of tennis courts, and in the hall, in winter, Badminton is played.

While sport was being looked to, other matters were not forgotten, and the same year which saw tennis inaugurated saw the beginning of what is now a most diligent Dorcas Society. Last year 170 members belonged to it. The Society meets once a fortnight and distributes about 600 garments each winter to the poor people of London.

In the following year, the Training College was opened, and a very thriving "Old Girls' Club" formed. The latter, which meets once a month, has 240 members, and is a means of bringing school girls together again in a very pleasant and profitable manner.

TRAINING COLLEGE STUDENTS LISTENING TO A LECTURE.

Since these three years of inaugurations, the School has gone on developing itself on the usual lines, until it is now recognised as one of the important Schools in London. Much of its sure and steady progress is due to the wise leadership of Miss Rigg, and the competent help she derives from her staff. And in all things, the Governors of the School have always been most willing to provide by every means in their power towards the improvement and maintenance of a first-rate School. The Mary Datchelor, with the exception of the Frances Mary Buss Schools, is the only endowed

School in London allowed by its scheme to keep girls until they are eighteen or nineteen years of age. In the Training School, of course, students may study up to any age.

The School has a good reputation in outside examinations. In Music, many of the Mary Datchelor students have taken their L.R.A.M. degrees, and the first Liszt Scholarship was won by a Mary Datchelor girl of 16.

In Art, some have been much distinguished later, in the Lambeth School of Art, and have taken good places in the examinations of the Royal Drawing Society.

Amongst those who have been prominent in University examinations must be mentioned especially Miss Lucy Brough, who last summer closed her fourth year at Girton by taking first-class honours in the final examinations for the Classical Tripos.

The following institutions have been treated in this series of "Famous Girls' Schools":—

December, 1899.—Cheltenham Ladies' College.
February, 1900.—Wycombe Abbey.
April, 1900.—Frances Mary Buss Schools.
September, 1900.—Roedean.
December, 1900.—The Grey Coat Hospital.
March, 1901.—Edinburgh Ladies' College.
May, 1901.—Blackheath High School.
July, 1901.—Royal School, Bath.
August, 1901.—Bedford High School.
September, 1901.—St. Katharines, N.B.
December, 1901.—Victoria College, Belfast.

MISS RIGG, HEAD MISTRESS OF THE MARY DATCHELOR SCHOOL FROM ITS FOUNDATION.

THE WASTREL ROSE.

THE rose I rescued from the waste
And took unto my breast,
And there in goodly shelter placed,
And tended and caressed;
My dream by night, my thought by day,
My being's very part,
With cruel thorns that covert lay,
Has poniarded my heart!

O rose, my rose of rich delight,
To whom I gave my trust,
How can I crush thy petals bright
And cast them in the dust?
Unchidden, unreproached by me.
Still in my bosom lie;
Could meeter retribution be
Than in its dearth to die!

WILLIAM TOYNBEE.

The Gentle Art of Perplexing.

How Muriel and Nance Puzzled the Professor.

By HENRY E. DUDENEY ("*The Puzzle King*").

EDITORIAL NOTE.

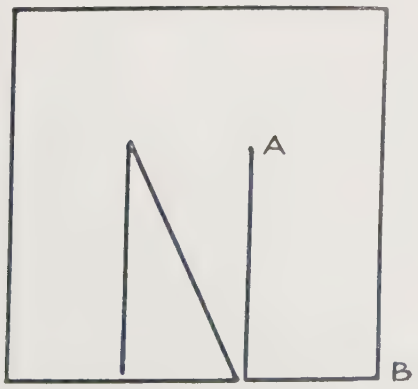
In the December Number Mr. Dudeney told the tale of how two girls, Muriel and Nance, determined to puzzle their Uncle William, a learned Cambridge Professor. They asked him six bewildering questions, while the Professor in turn puzzled them six times. The answers to the twelve riddles and puzzles are given in this article.

On New Year's Day, as arranged, the two Mayburn girls and their uncle, the Cambridge professor, proceeded to give their answers to the various puzzles that had been propounded during Christmas. The first in order was the professor's riddle. Now, the worst of conundrums is that they lend themselves to so many different answers, all depending on puns or plays on words, that you can never be sure that you have found the one intended, or even the best one. For example, if somebody were to ask us offhand: "When is a fish most out of water?" we might reply: "When it's a perch in a birdcage;" or "When it's a sole on a boot;" or "When it's a Jack in a box;" or "When it's a skate on the foot;" or "When it's a place on the roof of a 'bus;' or "When it's a dab at ping-pong." We might go on like this indefinitely. In fact, a conundrum is what mathematicians would call an indeterminate problem.

It was simply in order to expose this weakness in the conundrum form of puzzle that the professor asked the girls the old riddle, "What is most like a cat looking out of a window?" He explained that in passing a house that had two windows on one side that were just alike (the difference being practically only one of situation), he noticed a cat looking out of one of these windows. The old riddle immediately occurred to him, and he thought a better answer would certainly be, "The same cat looking out of a similar window."

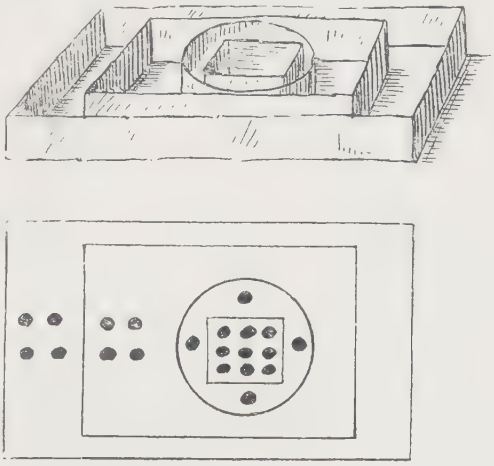
Muriel suggested the answer, "A similar cat looking out of the same window," but the professor thought this was not quite so good, because it was easier to find two windows that were almost exactly alike than two cats.

Nancy gave as the answer to her riddle, "When is a closed door not a door?" "When it is a negress (an egress)" The professor at first objected that a shut door could not be an egress, an exit or an entrance, but he afterwards withdrew the point, for he saw that the fact of its being temporarily closed did not debar it from being opened when required for the purpose for which it was built.



HOW TO TURN THE LETTER L INTO AN N WITH ONE STROKE OF THE PENCIL.

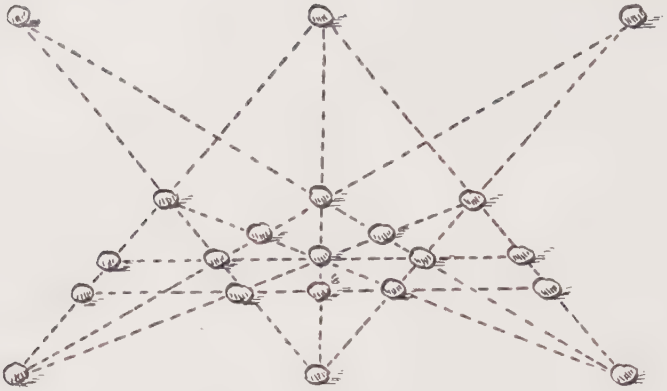
The trick consists in enclosing the letter L in a square frame, so that one loses the L and sees only the framed N.



THE ANSWER TO THE DOG AND KENNEL PUZZLE.

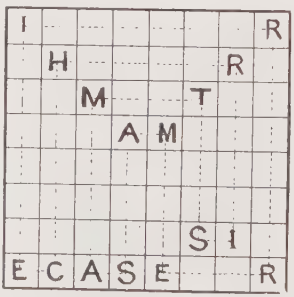
The trick of this puzzle consists in placing the boxes inside one another.

The girls were anxious to know how the man with the twenty-one dogs arranged them in four



THE SOLUTION OF THE NUT PROBLEM.

kennels, so that although the buyer was told he could purchase all the animals within any of the four kennels, he was thus compelled to buy an even number of pairs, and to take the odd dog. The trick of this puzzle consists in placing the boxes inside one another, as shown in the illustration, and the diagram underneath will make quite clear to you how the dogs may be placed. Now if we buy the dogs contained in the small square kennel, we get eight (an even number of pairs—four pairs) and the odd dog. If we buy all that are contained within the round kennel, we get thirteen dogs, because the nine in the first kennel are contained within the second kennel. Thirteen is an even number of pairs and the odd dog. If we buy the next kennel we get seventeen dogs, which again is an even number of pairs and the odd dog. If we take the outer kennel, we get all the twenty-one dogs, which will be an even number of pairs and the odd dog. Therefore, by this trick of placing the kennels inside one another, like a "nest of boxes," the buyer was obliged to do as was stated.



THE CORRECT SOLUTION OF THE JUMBLED LETTER PUZZLE.

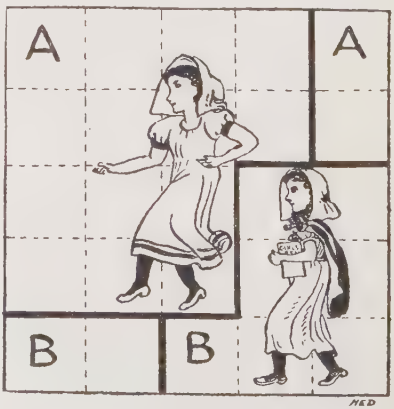
Then came Nancy's puzzle, in which she required the letter L to be turned into an N with one stroke of the pencil. Her way of doing this was rather artful. As will be seen from the illustration, it consisted in enclosing the letter in a square frame, and in thus so completely deceiving the eye that one quite loses the original L and sees nothing but the framed N. It will be seen that A to B represents the original L, and as the lines have purposely not been quite joined at two places, the reader can trace the course that the pencil must take.

It will be remembered that the professor said, "Angelina was out walking, when she happened to turn round and saw that her friend Bessie was walking after her, 400 yards behind, and trying to overtake her. So they each walked 200 yards in a straight line, with their faces towards each other. They then found that they were still 400 yards apart. How did this happen?" Well, it is true they had their faces towards each other, but it is not stated that they walked towards each other. Therefore, if Angelina had walked her 200 yards backwards, the state of things recorded might very well have happened. This was, in fact, the explanation that the professor offered.

The answer to Muriel's Nut Puzzle is shown clearly in the illustration, where it will be found that she has succeeded in so placing the twenty-one nuts that they form eleven lines with five nuts in every line.

This is how the professor arranged the nine figures so that the odd ones and the even ones added up the same:—

$$1 + 3 + 7 + \tfrac{9}{5} = 12{\cdot}8$$
$$2 + 4 + 6 + {\cdot}8 = 12{\cdot}8$$



THE TWO LITTLE MAIDS' PUZZLE SOLVED.

In the top line 9/5 is equal to 1 4/5, which is the same as 1·8; and in the bottom line the 8 has a decimal dot before it. Both lines, therefore, add up to 12·8.

If you look at the drawing of the Two Little Maids, as it is now given, you will see at a glance how it is to be cut into four pieces that will form two perfect squares. Cut along the dark lines: then the two pieces marked A will form one square, and the two pieces marked B will make the other. The dotted lines are given to show you just how you can find the directions for the cuts. You will notice that we divide the square picture into twenty-five little squares. Now 25 is not only a square number (5 times 5), but it is made by adding together two other square numbers, 9 and 16 (that is, 3 times 3, and 4 times 4). Therefore, if we can manage our cuts so as to get one little girl into a square containing nine of these little sections, and the other into a square containing sixteen of them, we shall solve the puzzle.

The answer to the professor's square puzzle will be seen if you look carefully at the illustration, where all the letters have been omitted except those where the turnings of our strokes occur. It will be seen that all the letters can be struck out in sixteen strokes, if we follow the dotted line from A to M, then to E, and so on, and that sentence reads, "A Merrie Christmas."

Then we come to Nancy's puzzle of the Honey Merchant. The two answers are as follows:—

	Full.	Half-full.	Empty.
A	2	3	2
B	2	3	2
C	3	1	3
A	3	1	3
B	3	1	3
C	1	5	1

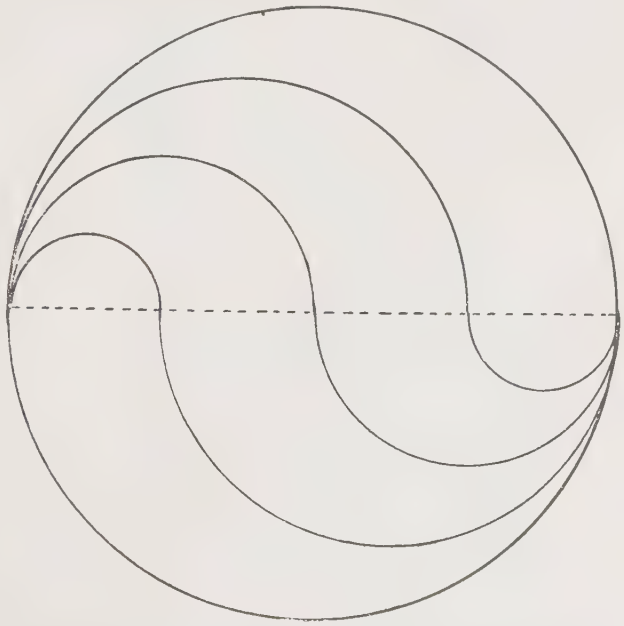
You will thus see that in each case the three men, A, B, and C, receive each seven barrels, and a quantity equal to three-and-a-half barrels of honey.

The way to cut the Circular Short-Cake into four exactly equal parts by three cuts of exactly equal length, is shown in the illustration. The dotted line is inserted simply to show you how these pretty curves are obtained. Divide the dotted line into four equal parts, and then with your compasses describe the three half-circles on each side.

The last puzzle was Muriel's. "When my married sister was born," she said, "my father laid aside £5 for her, and promised that on every succeeding birthday of hers he would add £5. Although he kept his word, it is a curious fact that when my sister became twenty-one years of age, the sum had only amounted to £25?"

We should at first suppose that, as one £5 was paid on the date of birth, and there had since been twenty-one anniversaries of that event, there should have been 22 times £5, or as much as £110. But when we are told that the elder sister was born on 29th February, the secret is half out, but not quite. Suppose, for example, that she was born on 29th February, 1876, then she would enter five leap years before she was twenty-one years of age, and therefore (remembering the £5 paid at birth), there should have been 6 times £5, or £30. But we were told that there was only £25. Therefore she must have been born on 29th February, 1880, because then there would only be four leap years before she came of age, for the reason that years ending in two 0's, like 1900, are not leap years. Consequently she would only have had four anniversaries of her birthday, bringing the sum of £25.

These are the answers to the puzzles. It is said that Muriel and Nancy answered correctly all those given by their uncle, except the Shortcake Puzzle, and that the professor was only beaten by the Two Little Maids.



THE ANSWER TO THE CIRCULAR SHORT-CAKE PUZZLE.

The solution is to divide the dotted line into four equal parts, and then with compasses to describe the three half circles on each side.

The following pages are entirely the work of girls, both as to letterpress and illustrations. "Our Readers' Own Realm" appears three times a year, and has been started to give girls an opportunity of putting their work to the test of public and editorial criticism.

THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

The Plot of a Novel.

IRENE MAUNDER.

Who has won the Second Prize in the Story Competition.

The plot of a story was the subject given to competitors for the first prize. It has not been very successfully treated. If my girls think of a story, they will find one strong idea dominating the whole. This is the germ idea. From this germ idea spring secondary ideas that more or less form the plot. Take "Jane Eyre," for instance. The idea of the story is the dominance of duty in a life. The author begins to weave her story round this idea. In the first chapter we are told everything that is needful for us to know about Jane, and we are given a glimpse into her character. Then come the great scenes that spring out of the school life, and that are strongly attached to the germ idea. After this comes the Thornfield episode, in which the mystery in the book is touched upon. Soon after Jane Eyre meets Rochester. This is the first great episode in the book, and the author spreads herself upon it. Then come many minor chapters, in which the mystery of the story is deepened, until at last the arrival of Captain Fairfax is arranged for, and we have the second great episode given to us. Jane is in love with Mr. Rochester, but he is not so clear and defined in his attitude towards her. Then at last comes the great situation. He loves Jane, and they are about to be married. The point is reached towards which everything has been working. My girls know the story. How the fulfilment is nearly reached. How it all fades away. This is the great object of the book. As the story goes on we find Jane wandering alone. She is gathered in by strangers. Another man falls in love with her, she nearly listens to him, when she hears the voice of Mr. Rochester calling to her. She returns to find him a cripple and blind. But he is free, and they are married. This is the idea of the story, unfilled yet by details. Every character is carefully handled to meet its requirements.

JOAN SHAW BLAIKLEY.

Who has been awarded the Second Prize in the Second Class of the Drawing Competition.

In the higher and better plots the events turn on the development of character. In the less important ones they turn on mere incident. This is an important distinction. In Jane Eyre the character development is the all-in-all. The whole struggle of duty is a part of that. There is not a single scene in which character is not painted by successive touches. We all seem to be seeing more, learning more, of the spiritual nature of the principal characters. In books of the less significant kind the characters are all merely conventional. One is a villain, another is a hero, another is, in stage language, "a heavy father," and a fourth is a singing chambermaid. But they have no pretence to be other than mere puppets, made to pattern. They merely bear

IDA C. HONY.
Winner of the First Prize in the Second Class of the Story Competition.

RUTH DE V. ETHERIDGE.
Whose story secures her the Second Prize in the Second Class.

EILEEN HYNES.
Whose Essay has been awarded a share of the Second Prize in the Essay Competition.

FLORA SIDNEY WOOLF.
Awarded a share of the Second Prize in the Essay Competition.

MAY FORGAN.
Winner of the First Prize in the Photograph Competition.

Honourably Mentioned.

JOHANNA C. M. HUFFNAGEL's plot is extremely well-written for a girl who is not English. The situations are strong, but we are not in sympathy with the heroine. Johanna should have contrived to make Elizabeth and William know each other before his marriage, or to have produced a far greater conflict in the mind of Elizabeth when she meets William.

"Charlotte Corday," by GERTRUDE PITT, is excellent. It gives a very distinct idea of two sisters, but the plot is not sufficiently worked out. We cannot understand why Charlotte is moved to the decisive action.

Commended.

DAISY SCOTT, ETHEL ADAMS, OLIVETTE NORTON, W. SHEPHERD, MURIEL PYMAN, DOROTHY CORY, ESTHER BELL, ELENOR SHEARD, D. E. GIFFORD, BLANCHE TRACY, WINIFRED WEST, KATHERINE BELL, D. CANDY, DOROTHY MORE, MADGE EVERALL, K. J. BAYLISS, GLADYS RAPHAEL.

SECOND CLASS.—A SHORT STORY.

The First Prize of 10s. 6d. is awarded to IDA CAROLINE HONY (aged 15), Bishops Cannings Vicarage, Devizes. "The Story of a Little Wooden Bear." It is very charming, and carries the sense of the Swiss district with it.

The Second Prize of 7s. 6d. goes to RUTH DE VERE ETHERIDGE, Post Office, Lee-on-the-Solent, Hants (aged 13½), for her story, "The Fakir's Curse." It is very good, indeed, for thirteen, and very tragic.

Honourably Mentioned.

Next in order of merit come WINIFRED PHILLIPS, "The Heart of a

the burden of the purely exterior events, wholly dissociated from their own personality, which are necessary to the conduct of the story. In one word, the higher plot is the story of a mind and heart, while the other is a story of incidents.

In the plots sent in, there is not enough of the plot distinctly formulated. I have chosen "For an English Queen," by ALICE GRANT ROSMAN (19), care of E. W. O'Halloran. Pirie Street, Adelaide, South Australia, as having the best possibilities for working up into a story. To her, therefore, I award the First Prize, one guinea. There are faults to find in the tale. Would it not, for instance, be difficult to personate King Karl, and be easier to have someone else to be the Regent?

IRENE MAUNDER (21), 86, Tyrwhitt Road, St. John's, S.E., sends a character sketch rather than a story, but it is very distinct, and could be worked into a tale. It needs a crisis. Clare is too easily turned aside from her purpose. There should be some more effective reason given for her total abandonment of a scheme that is full of excellent possibilities. I have awarded Irene the Second Prize of 10s. 6d.

HONOR BATCHELOR sends perhaps the best plot of a novel, but as she is over age we can only mention it. It also requires a crisis.

PRIZE DRAWING—A SUMMER MAIDEN.

By ELSIE N. ROBINSON.

Awarded the First Prize in the First Class.

Hero;" SYBIL DE VERE SCOTT, "Real Pluck," an exciting story of a leopard; "Penelope," by DAISY GRADIDGE. It is naturally written, but Pater should not be made absurd. "Just too Late," by DOROTHY HENKEL. The story is of a little boy who is dying, and is not sent to a convalescent home in time to save his life. It is tenderly written. NORA PATTISON, "An Unfortunate Mistake," about a man who goes to a ball and returns in the carriage of another man.

Commended.

ANNIE WALTON, SHEILA KAYE SMITH, ALEXANDRA ANDOE, "ELAINE," GRACE DYKES SPICER, PHYLLIS DEAN EVENS, CONSTANCE DE MARINEL, MURIEL A. BEDSON.

THE DRAWINGS.

I asked a friend of mine, who has great experience in judging the work of tyro artists, to give her opinion on the sketches and studies sent in. Her verdict was very encouraging. She chose the drawing by ELSIE N. ROBINSON, Taormina, Helensburgh, N.B., who carries off the First Prize of one guinea. "It is soft and graceful," she said, "and deserves the first prize. There are a few faults, but they need not be considered."

"Summer," by MAUDE M. HANSON (17), Elm Road, Wembley, Middlesex, deserves the Second Prize of 10s. 6d. The children are not so good as is the rest of the composition, but they stand well in their place. The alley of trees and the stone wall are excellent.

Honourably Mentioned.

FRANCES IRENE CLARK (16), deserves the first hon. mention. There is a charm in the seated figure that the somewhat clumsy drawing of the vegetation does not affect. R. E. J. CARR'S drawing of summer roses is excellent. The flowers are admirably expressed. OLIVETTE NORTON'S "Homage to Summer" is a very painstaking drawing, representing a storm wind, Cupid, and a mermaid paying their court to the lord of sunshine and roses. A decorative piece of work which needs attention to detail, but which is well imagined. ISABEL POCOCK'S "Summer Crowned Queen," is a charming drawing. EDITH MARY BROOMHALL. Two girls talking, while the tennis game is abandoned. The composition is graceful, but the figures are not quite in their place.

Mentioned.

The Honble. FITZMAURICE DEANE MORGAN, the drawing of the tree deserving notice; PHŒBE

RENNELL, HELEN E. M. WYLDE, HELENA SANDELL, CICELY MARY BIDDLE, BRENDA BELL MILLER (the dog is good).

THE SECOND CLASS.

The First Prize of 10s. 6d. in the Second Class is awarded to the Honble MAY SAUMAREZ, 43, Grosvenor Place, W. There is a real sense of light and shade in this little sketch.

The Second Prize of 7s. 6d. to JANE SHAW BLAIKLEY, 13, Elsworthy Terrace, Primrose Hill, N.W. The drawing is suggestive.

Honourably Mentioned.

The first name on the list is BERENICE VINCE MATTHEWS, for a charming head and hands of a girl holding flowers. The drawing is slight, but it is very suggestive. E. PROBY ADAMS. "Summer." The touch is remarkably free. F. M. CANTRELL. A rosebud, very carefully drawn. PHYLLIS DEAN EVENS. "Summer Blossoms." Very prettily touched in. M. GASKELL. A little girl at the seaside gazing at her toy ship. The drawing of the sea and rocks is excellent. DOROTHY SCRIMGEOUR.

Commended.

"Summer," by MABEL EDITH HANSON; OLIVE MALKEN, HELENA M. HUBBARD, OLIVE M. PAYNE, and MABEL ALICE BANKS.

I have a fairly good drawing sent in by A. BALFOUR, from Bendigo, Victoria, Australia, but it has no coupon, and the letter accompanying the drawing does not mention her age.

THE PRIZE ESSAYS.

The essays are thoroughly good, and are in many respects the best things that have been sent up. If the competitors would always keep to nature, and give the effects of gloom and of gaiety as they are wrought there they would produce far better work.

The prize of one guinea is given to "RUSTICA," Beverley, East Yorks. A very vivid essay, which gives the atmosphere of the old-world town with the chiming of the bells. There is a touch of character in it.

Honourably Mentioned.

The first place is divided between "LUCIA'S" charming essay on life in a small Scottish village (the character drawing, however, is very slight) and ALICE GRANT ROSMAN'S wild Australian garden. FLORENCE BENTON gives a very charming account of Swavesey.

The second place belongs to IRENE MAUNDER. Her essay is very poetic and well written. She describes a little out-of-the-way village in Yorkshire, possessed of one street only.

"ISAWITH" (Leicester), sends an interesting sketch of a girl's life as a telegraphist.

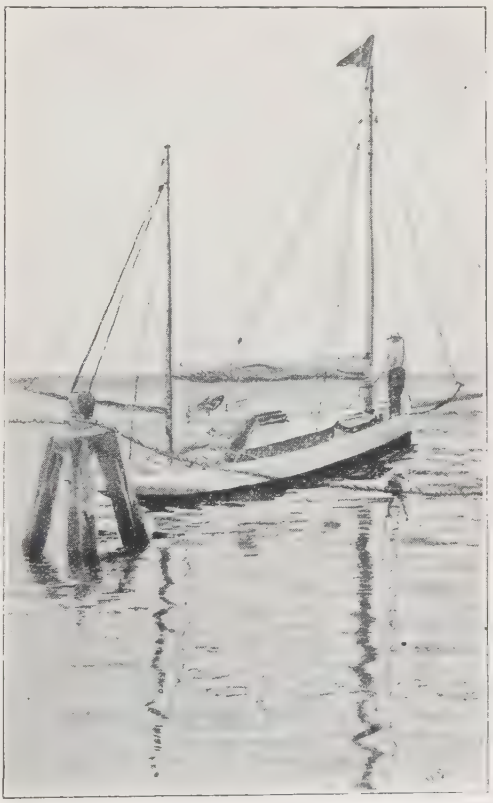
HONOR BATCHELOR'S account of a wet day in a small hotel, and how it affects character, shows observation.

Highly Commended.

Perhaps the best essay for character drawing is by AVIS ELWES. MARY WALKER sends a charmingly-written essay, with a good deal of descriptive power in it. The local customs are well chosen. She has, however, not given any of the quaint village characters. FANNY VLASTO'S essay on Paris is written with feeling and with vivacity. DOROTHY FRANCIS sends a very quaint description of Warwick, taken from the point of view of bells in the tower. "BERYL" gives a picturesque account of Calcutta, and of the varied races one meets in the streets. WINIFRED SHEPHERD gives, in quite a short space, a very clear idea of Barnet. MAY TIMMS, WINIFRED C. SHEPHEARD, ESTHER G. BELL, JENNIE E. WEDGWOOD, CONSTANCE CLERK, ROSAMOND G. GLEDHILL, HILDA PRESTON, CONSTANCE DE MARINAL, ANZELLA PAGE, AGNES E CASH, E. C. DAWE, MURIEL MOULTON, MARGARET A. FOUNTAIN, GERTRUDE PITT, DAISY SCOTT, GLADYS RAPHAEL, BESSIE MARY TYAS, WINIFRED BELL, "DAISY," KATHARINE SAXBY, ETHEL CASSON, MURIEL PYMAN, HILDA BALL, HENRIETTE SALOMON, CLARA WALKER, AMINTA CASSERES, RUBY FREWEN, ABIMBOLA BLAIZE, GRACE JAMES.

SECOND CLASS

EILEEN HYNES, 21, Hamilton Road, Ealing, W., who sends in a rather humorous account of Mill Hill Com-



A SUMMER SEA.
By DOROTHY SCRIMGEOUR.
Awarded an Honourable Mention in the First Class

mon, which will be published, divides the prize of 10s. 6d. with FLORA SIDNEY WOOLF, 9, Colinette Road, Putney, S.W. For power of description this essay stands first.

Honourably Mentioned.

WILLMA MEIKLE tells us of amusing characters in a village. LENORA DAVIS writes a charming little essay, which shows a good deal of promise, on some place in Wales. MARY MONCK sends a very interesting account of the eccentric ways of an old man. PHYLLIS DEAN EVENS sends a charming little description of her garden. DAISY WEDDELL, a description of a Northumberland village, in which the black North is very well conveyed.

Commended.

CONSTANCE DE MARINEL, STELLA PRESTON, ENID GILL, J. M. CONNOR, INA MARY WOOD, E. M. HANSON.

PHOTOGRAPHS.

The Prizes have been awarded by Miss Craigie Halkett.

The first prize of 10s. 6d. is awarded to MARY FORGAN (aged 17), Priory Place, Craigie, Perth, N.B. It is very good and very artistic from a pictorial point of view.

A prize of 5s. to GWENDOLEN ENGLISH, 85, Bloor Street, E. Toronto, Canada (aged 14). Would be better if the background were simpler. The striped blouse needs a plain background. To J. L. SAXBY, Walton-by-Clevedon, Somerset (aged 18); and to MARY DE LAUFOUR, Leacon Hall, Warehorne, Ashford, Kent.

Honourably Mentioned.

MARY FORGAN, INAGH FREWEN, IRENE OSBORNE, CONSTANCE DARBY, MARJORIE MAITLAND, EVELYN SHARPE, ALINE GRIMSTON, BEATRICE I. L. COLLINS and CHARLOTTE PURVES.

We hope to publish some of these photographs from time to time.

Commended.

MAJORIE MAITLAND, a very good group; GWENDOLEN ENGLISH, "A Game of Chess;" "Taking Dolly's Photograph," CONSTANCE GARDNER LODGE.

"My Brother with his Horse and Dog," by IRENE OSBORNE, would have been a good photograph but for the smudgy appearance. This seems to have been brought about by being toned with a combined bath or an old one.

"A Ghost Photograph." The ghostly appearance is quite missed. It should not be exposed so long as the rest of the picture, but, as soon as it is produced, withdrawn at once. "CLOTILDE SEIR."

THE COLLECTION.

The First Prize of One Guinea in this Competition is awarded to ETHEL BARLOW, age 19, "Deene," Streatham, S.W. ETHEL BARLOW sends a most beautiful collection of 58 different shells, beautifully arranged and all perfect specimens. The Second Prize of 10s. 6d. is divided between FRIDA PHILLIPS, age 13, High Elms, Hitchin, Herts, and C. ETHEL CARLETON WILLIAMS, age 16½, 23, Broomgrove Road, Sheffield; FRIDA PHILLIPS sends a collection of shells, fossils, seaweeds and flowers. The flowers are the most complete collection, and are noticeable for their exhaustiveness, and for the way in which the flowers are pressed. ETHEL WILLIAMS sends the largest collection of wild flowers, ferns and herbs received, with their botanical names to ordinary names appended. It is a fine collection, beautifully done.

Honourable Mention.

ETHEL MORGAN sends about 28 specimens. These are the most beautifully pressed flowers sent in. The names are given in Latin, and the place where she found each specimen is also given. M. A. CULLIS—not an exhaustive collection, but fastened with exquisite neatness. K. WALLIS—a collection of 21 specimens of seaweed, with a cover charmingly designed, adorned with seaweed. Inside are about 21 specimens beautifully fixed. MARGUERITE RODHAM (age 19)—pressed wild flowers beautifully done. In some instances the flower is taken to bits, and the different items are recorded.

Commended.

URSULA RUCK—a collection of wild flowers, distinguished by having the characteristic of the flower set aside from the general specimen; very painstakingly done. WINIFRED WEST—110 specimens, very carefully arranged; some of them are very good, the best marsh mallow and traveller's joy that has come to us. GWENDOLEN M. CLEGG—107 specimens, a good collection. MILDRED E. STATHAM has rather spoilt her specimens by stitching them on to the cardboard. I would notice the excellence of the specimens of the foxglove and the buttercup. CONSTANCE E. H. LUNN—an excellent collection, distinguished by a drawing of the plant appended to the one that is pressed. MURIEL ATKINSON—collected in a fortnight; nicely fixed GRACE TROTMAN—very daintily done in a wooden box; very clearly done. MARJORIE ELPHINSTONE—120 specimens; rather crowded up, but very neatly done. MARY STOKES—190 specimens, got together in the holidays. It is a pity that the flowers are pressed on exercise paper.

Mention.

GWENDOLINE EDWARDS, ROSS GARLL, MARY G. RICHARDS, MARION D. COLE, VIOLA GERRISH (12), HELEN BLACKBOURNE, MAY BYRON, DOROTHY M. WALKER, PHYLLIS CARR, NORA GILLOMAN, who sends a single specimen of a heart-shaped stone found in Cork Harbour, CECILY M. FRYER, AMY G. TUCKER, EVADNE HUMPHREYS, GWENNYTH JONES, MURIEL E. N. ATKINSON, CICELY J. BACON, E. K. BLACKETT, M. ELPHINSTONE, HILDA HARBORD.

PRIZE.—PLOT OF A NOVEL.

By Alice Grant Rosman (aged 20).

Winner of the First Prize in the First Class.

Karl, King of Leitzenberg, a State in the South of Europe, having contracted a marriage displeasing to his subjects, is deposed, and forced to fly into exile.

He and his wife, accompanied by their nephew, take refuge in England, where, by and by, a daughter, Marghara is born to them.

After a space of eight years the Queen dies, and the King, worn out by grief and trouble, survives her but a few months, leaving Marghara to the care of his nephew Hugo, whom he bids do all in his power to regain for her the kingdom her father has lost. The plot centres round Hugo and the many difficulties and dangers he has to contend with before he at least succeeds in fulfilling his mission, and placing Marghara upon the throne of her father.

SYNOPSIS.

The story opens with the death of King Karl, and the arrival in England of his cousin, Count Franz Geirstein, the only man who knows the whereabouts of the exiled family, and who brings with him important news of a rising in Leitzenberg. The present King, a weak ruler, has given nothing but dissatisfaction to a people who are nationally energetic and anxious for advancement. A powerful faction in the State is now clamouring for a constitution modelled on the lines of that of England, and the King, quite unable to satisfy their desires, has been forced to fly the country. It is even whispered that should King Karl return with his baby daughter, the latter would be at once proclaimed Queen of Leitzenberg. Upon discovering the death of his relative a bold idea strikes Count Franz. His own death shall be reported in Leitzenberg, and he will return disguised as King Karl. There are but two things necessary for the carrying out of this plan —the consent and co-operation of Marghara's guardian. He therefore broaches the subject to the latter, misrepresenting his own motives, and persuading Hugo that it is for Marghara's sake alone that he is anxious so to act. Hugo, feeling he must lose no opportunity that may be favourable to his baby cousin's future, at last consents, and he and Count Franz enter into an agreement.

Hugo is to go to Leitzenberg, and endeavour to pave the way for the supposed King Karl and his little daughter. If successful they are to enter the capital in triumph, where the King will present to the people their child Queen, promising, as Regent, to grant all their requests as to the remodelling of the kingdom, and to have Marghara educated by English people. Hugo promises never to divulge the secret of Franz's identity to the people of Leitzenberg, on condition that he (Franz) yields up the crown to Marghara on her attaining her majority.

Hugo persists in having a statement, duly witnessed, and signed by Franz, of the whole facts, to be used against him in default of his keeping his promise.

Marghara meanwhile has been staying at the house of friends, named Everest, who are waiting for Hugo to break to her the sad news of her father's death.

It is therefore necessary for Hugo to silence them on the subject. He confides the whole story to Robert

A PORTRAIT.
By Gwendolen English (aged 14).
Awarded a Prize in the Photograph Competition.

Everest, a young barrister, with whom he is intimate, and the latter advises him to have the statement copied for fear of treachery, and to leave the statement safely with him. To this Hugo agrees, needless to say without mentioning it to Count Franz.

Then, almost immediately, he departs for Leitzenberg, with such success that four months later the supposed King Karl is established as Regent to the child Queen, and Marghara's subjects grow contented in the belief that they are being governed by a Regent, who for eight years has studied the laws and customs of the greatest country in the world.

Twelve years pass, and during this time the intrigues of the Regent have succeeded in keeping Hugo almost entirely from his cousin's side. Whenever there is an errand of importance Hugo is chosen for it, and to all appearances he is in high favour at Court. He knows better. Lately he has feared more than ever the ultimate result of his agreement with Franz, for it is known that Marghara rarely appears in public, and then only surrounded by ladies chosen by the Regent. Now—dreadful thought—it is whispered that she is irresponsible—mad. And suppose anything should happen to him (Hugo). Might he not be killed, seemingly by accident, but in reality by evil intention, and who would there be to keep Franz to his agreement? He little knows that the Regent is too fearful of the spying courtiers about him to endanger the life of his young kinsman, or that he imagines he has already employed more effectual means towards this end. He has not discovered that the copy of the statement in his possession has been stolen as the original, and a similarly sealed packet placed in its stead.

About this time Robert Everest and his sister are travelling in Europe, and, remembering his friend Hugo, Robert determines to visit the capital of Leitzenberg. They reach there the day that Marghara and her suite are returning from her country palace, and arrive just in time to see the procession pass into the town.

They are much struck with the Queen's beauty, and as they stand watching her among the crowds are surprised to hear the terrible report of her madness.

Meeting Hugo, Robert Everest is apprised of his anxieties and suspicions, and at his earnest request decides to remain awhile in the capital, which he can easily do, being a man of wealth and leisure.

The Everests become favourites at Court. Robert's young sister excites the admiration of the Regent, and is offered a post as lady-in-waiting to Marghara. This, by the advice of her brother and Hugo, she accepts, and the two girls become close friends, Marghara's fragile loveliness appealing to the English girl's stronger nature.

Among the courtiers is a young noble, Lieutenant Max von Keppler, who falls in love with Helen. She returns his affection, but it is deemed prudent by the friends of both that the affair shall be kept secret pending the majority of the Queen.

As Marghara's twenty-first birthday approaches, Hugo tries to come to some understanding with the Regent, but is ignored. In consequence Robert Everest is summoned to England on private business—this business being to obtain the original agreement between the Regent and Hugo.

During his absence the Regent offers marriage and his crown to Helen, who indignantly refuses, reminding him that by right the crown belongs to Marghara.

He declares Marghara shall now never wear it, and shortly after she disappears. Hugo threatens vengeance if she does not return, but the Regent laughs at him. During these years he has been building up power, and there are many men in his service, while Hugo has none.

The Regent at last makes Helen's marriage with him the price of Marghara's safety. Helen, to save her friend, agrees to sacrifice her own happiness, and Marghara reappears. It is a popular rumour that she has been under restraint, and many strange stories concerning her gain currency. Helen's wedding takes place on Marghara's birthday, and there are all manner of rejoicings in Leitzenberg.

After the wedding, in the great hall of the palace, the Regent addresses the people, saying that they have long wished to be governed like the English, and that he has now given them an English Queen. His daughter Marghara is quite irresponsible, and could never govern, and he now calls upon them to proclaim Helen Queen.

All at once there is a movement in the crowd, and Hugo, jumping on the platform, asks audience of the people. He makes the whole story public, and shows for proof (much to the astonishment of the whilom Regent) the agreement between Franz and himself. He then calls upon them to cry "Long live Queen Marghara."

Marghara's sanity is proved, and she is brought forward, and addresses a few words to the people, winning their hearts by her gracious beauty.

Franz is seized by the mob and killed by violence.

Helen marries Max, and remains at Court, as does also her brother.

Hugo becomes the young Queen's truest councillor, and later, at the wish of the people, and after many times refusing, consents to become her Consort.

CHARACTERS.

MARGHARA.—Fair and lovable, alike in body and mind, but clinging and dependent on others.

HELEN.—A typical English girl, handsome, clever, and ambitious; but devoted to Marghara, and capable of great self-sacrifice.

FRANZ.—A wily, political schemer, shifty and double-dealing, hoodwinking those around him by his polished dissimulation.

HUGO.—A brave and impetuous soldier; devoted to his cousin Marghara, and willing to lay down his life to further her cause.

ROBERT.—Hugo's great friend, and brilliantly clever; a barrister by profession and a diplomat by nature—a man who views the game of Politics as a player that of chess. Cool and calculating, and never taken unawares.

PRIZE.—PLOT OF A NOVEL.

By Irene Maunder (aged 21).

Second Prize in the First Class.

(1) GERM OF THE PLOT.

The story is of a girl, Clare Morrison, who has been brought up rather strictly. After leaving school she grows tired of living at home, and insists on earning her own livelihood, and living in lodgings, although there is no necessity for her to do so. She is encouraged in the idea by a friend, who wishes to share rooms with her, and thinks the whole idea "grand fun!" Clare's father at length gives his consent to her trying the experiment for a year. The plot is the gradual working out of the circumstances that eventually modify her opinion as to the joys of independence. John Houghton, who lives opposite Clare, had conceived a strong affection for her when they were both schoolchildren, but he is very grave and strict in his notions, and Clare's wild scheme gives him a shock which he cannot get over. He visits her once or twice, since she has left home, and takes a still stronger fancy to Jean, the little Scotch girl with whom Clare lives. Meanwhile Jean's young uncle falls in love with Clare, who greatly prefers him to John. So gradually they sort themselves out, and finally Clare returns home in a proper frame of mind, and Jean's uncle frequently finds pressing business engagements that take him to a house opposite to that of John Houghton.

CHARACTERS.

Mr. Morrison.—Clare's father.
Mrs. Morrison.—Clare's mother.
Clare.
Ruth.—Clare's sister, aged sixteen.
Herbert.—Clare's brother, aged fourteen.
Tom.—Clare's brother, aged twelve.
John Houghton.—A friend.
Alice Dodd.—A school-friend of Clare.
Jean MacMoran.—A Scotch girl.
Mr. Macfadyen.—Jean's "Uncle Douglas."

(2) SYNOPSIS OF THE STORY.

Clare Morrison, wishing to do something startling, and hating to feel under any restraint, listened eagerly to her friend Alice's suggestion of leaving home, and living in lodgings. She thought it would be grand to be independent, and had visions of obtaining some important post. But eventually she was obliged to be content with a junior clerkship. Her father at first objected, but finally consented to her giving the scheme a year's trial, seeing how restless and unsettled she was at home. At the last Alice failed her. "She didn't think it would be such fun after all;" but in her place Clare heard of a Scotch girl, Jean MacMoran, who was

A SUMMER'S DAY.

By May Saumarez (aged 15).

A varied the First Prize in the Second Class of the Drawing Competition.

obliged to earn her own living. Jean had had a good post in London offered her, which she accepted, and she and Clare went to live in rooms at Brixton. John had for some time seen whither Clare was drifting, and by his efforts to prevent this calamity had really hastened it.

The story begins, I fear, with a number of quarrels between—

1st.—A very dirty little Tom, and a very elder-sisterly Clare.

2nd.—A pained and grieved John, and an indignant, mind-your-own-business Clare.

3rd.—An impudent, school-girlish Ruth, and a calmly-superior Clare.

Then it takes us to Clare's rooms, which are bare and uncomfortable, and introduces us to Jean MacMoran and her uncle, who had met her at Euston, and brought her to her rooms.

Clare found the office work very trying both to nerves and health, and the rooms very comfortless to return to in the evening. Every Saturday Jean went to stay with some relations till Monday, and Clare went home; but little by little she found herself getting out of touch with the home-folk, and treated almost like a visitor.

At first she would not do any housework, even in her rooms until one day she found that Jean did it all, and then she insisted on performing her fair share. Jean, wishing to economise, did a great deal of her own sewing, and Clare helped her. Jean did not care much for going out in the evening to theatres or concerts, and Clare did not care to go quite alone, nor yet to leave Jean behind. So she became more domesticated, and went out less than ever. At the office she was careless and inaccurate, and got snubbed accordingly, and was in fact a great deal more under restraint than in her father's house. The money that she earned was barely sufficient to pay for her board and lodging, and she was still dependent for pocket-money on her father. Gradually, therefore, she came to the conclusion that "independence" and "earning your own living" were two very different things. Indeed, she was heartily tired of it in a very few months, though she was too high-spirited to own to being so until the year of trial was over.

Then Jean fell ill, the London air not agreeing with the country girl. Clare resigned her post to nurse her indefatigably and, when she was a little better, accompanied her back to Scotland for the change of air they both so greatly needed.

Douglas Macfadyen, Jean's uncle, was from the first intensely amused at Clare, and interested in her. He teased her in his quiet, dry way, from the very beginning of their acquaintance. After a little, however, he grew to respect her pluck and perseverance, and her care for Jean, and gradually respect and interest deepened into love. Clare saw few visitors in their rooms, and Douglas Macfadyen's conversation and personality were so entertaining that she looked forward eagerly to his visits, and was delighted if Jean asked her to accompany her to her grandmother's house.

After Jean's illness, however, she had no desire to live any longer in lodgings, and wrote home to her mother asking her if she happened to require a lady housekeeper. Her mother wrote at once, saying how much they missed her, and longed for her return.

Somehow or other, John Houghton went for a holiday to Scotland, and came across Jean, and persuaded her to marry him. As for Clare, the last time Douglas happened to call at the Morrisons' home, she was making jam in the kitchen. "You can't see Clare," Ruth said; "will I do instead? Clare is making jam." "Yes," said Master Tom, "blackberry and apple, jars and jars!"

"Oh," said Douglas Macfadyen; "so Miss Morrison is making jam, is she?" And there was deep meaning in his tone.

CHARACTERS.

CLARE is rather obstinate, high-spirited, and very impressionable. She is induced to take the step she does partly through the enthusiasm of her friend, partly because she does not see why everyone should take it for granted that on leaving school she should be content "just to mess about at home," as she expressed it, "as though she were no better than a housekeeper;" and thirdly, because John was always enlarging on the duties of women, and she felt sure his views on the subject were aired for her benefit. She is fond of John, but he annoys her considerably, and she is far from being in love with him. She is affectionate and sensitive, and it is the fact that when she comes home she is treated as a visitor; that more than anything else shakes her resolve. Gradually she loses the feeling of being at war with all the world, and longs to return home.

JOHN is true and upright and kind, but he has not much tact, and is rather annoying at times. He fancies himself in love with Clare until he knows Jean, but her gentle disposition is much more pleasing to him than Clare's stubbornness. The fact of her earning her own living, which was a crime in Clare, was an additional virtue in Jean, because she was obliged to do so, and did it so bravely, in spite of her dislike to it.

JEAN herself is gentle, sweet-tempered, and sympathetic. She is very timid and quiet, but strong and true. She thinks John the model of all that is good.

DOUGLAS MACFADYEN is clever, well-read, and has a keen sense of humour. He is nearly ten years older than Clare, and makes allowances for her that John never would have done.

Clare's mother is timid and gentle, and always worried about something. Her father is shrewd and kind, though he pretends to be very stern, and really imagines he is.

RUTH is a jolly little schoolgirl, full of life and fun and mischief. She particularly delights in teasing Clare, and tyrannising over her small brothers, and is alternately a great trial and great comfort to her mother. Of the two boys, Herbert is the graver of the two; very fond of reading; while Tom is rough, noisy, and the possessor of a wonderful command of slang, and a strong dislike to soap and water.

PRIZE ESSAY.—"MY SURROUNDINGS."

By "RUSTICA" (aged 24).

(Winner of the First Prize in the First Class.

DING-DONG, ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, peals sonorously each day from the grey towers of our beautiful Minster, and of our parish church. Their oft-recurring ding-dong, ding-dong is typical of "my surroundings." Quiet, mŏnotonous, and old-world is this quaint market town, and many of the inhabitants seem to have the same characteristics.

Strangers come from far and wide to visit our Minster, not as in the old days, when criminals fled from justice to the "Sanctuary" chair, but leisurely and peacefully, to wonder at the marvellous handicraft of the dead-and-gone masons whose memory is so nobly perpetuated by that lofty fane, and the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault. Their grand monument guards one end of the town. At the northern end stands the old parish church, in an upper room of which the Flemish merchants of the Hanseatic League stored their goods when they came across the North Sea to the different fairs.

The old sacristan himself seems a relic of those bygone days, always gorgeous in a long blue gown, with large silver buttons, white gloves, and a formidable wand. On Sundays this latter is used to correct unruly school-children, on week-days to point out the wonderful carving to visitors, and the curious figures on a pillar for which old wandering minstrels paid. These same minstrels also gave an old silver chain, which the Mayoress of the Borough has the honour of wearing on state occasions.

Amid red-roofed houses, and separating the magnificent avenue of chestnut trees and modern houses from the old market place and narrow streets, stands our great gateway. History tells us a king once laid his weary head in the tiny room over the formidable iron gate, and held his Court in the country house adjoining. Perhaps, too, he hunted over the great common which stretches away to the west of the town, and which has now been given for ever to the inhabitants of the little Borough.

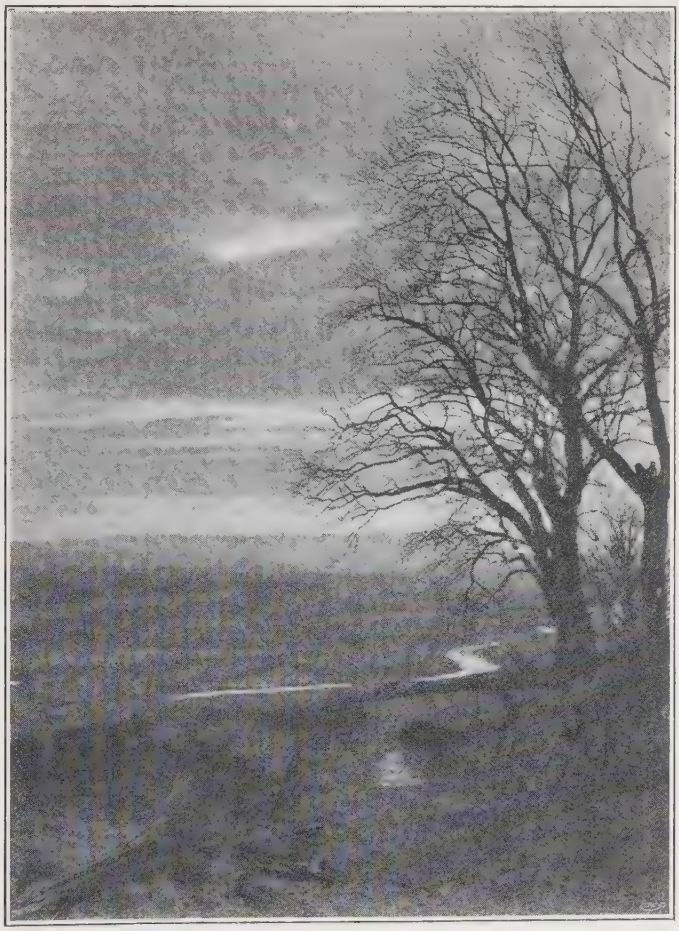
The hunting community is large, and ranges from the spick-and-span officers of the barracks to the small boy who attempts to follow hounds on a donkey. The jolly grey-headed "Master" is deservedly popular, and the dark winter days are often cheered by a meet, not too far from home, when great and small, those on foot, and those driving or bicycling, "join the glad throng, which goes laughing along, and all go a-hunting" too.

One familiar figure there is a little horsedealer, who hunts four days a week in the season, despite his seventy-two years, but who exercises the strictest economy in order to keep his hunters.

The tale goes that he once went to buy a cucumber, and was shown a frame in which several were growing.

"I will take that one," quoth our worthy friend, pointing to a small specimen. "How much is it?"

"Fourpence, sir."



TWILIGHT.

By MARY FORGAN (aged 17).

Awarded the First Prize in the Photograph Competition

"Here is the money; don't trouble to cut it now, I will call and fetch it in a few days!"

Exit, with all the dignity five-feet-two can command, and speechless indignation on the part of the gardener.

Perhaps the best types of quiet, market-town, "old-inhabitant" people are the "Twins"—two "girls"—and their brothers, who have always considered marriage beneath them, and are consequently, at sixty, still unmarried. Every morning the "boys" go down to business, and every evening they return, arm-in-arm, sometimes in a cab, for I am sorry to say they have their little weaknesses. The "girls" are always dressed alike, in the fashions of thirty years ago, with their pretty grey hair in ringlets.

When the bellman comes round the town we all listen breathlessly while he rings his bell, gives the old signal—"Oyez, oyez, oyez," bawls forth his announcements, and winds up with "God save the King."

The market is held every Saturday, but the great festivals for the country folk are the "Hirings." They are held every spring and autumn, and are the gathering together of the farm servants, male and female, to be "hired" for service by the farmers. The hinds, as they are called, stand round the market-cross, in wonderful clothes, and with still more wonderful forelocks, the result of much care and water. After being chosen by their future master, he gives them a "fest" (*i.e.*, fastening money), and at night they indulge in "all the fun of the fair."

The races are held in the summer, and then the whole population turns out and throngs up the common to the race-course, and wild, indeed, is the excitement if a local horse is running. Yorkshiremen *can* get excited sometimes.

Through pressure of space, the Prize Stories, "The Story of a Wooden Bear," by Ida C. Hony; "The Fakir's Curse," by Ruth de Vere Etheridge; Prize Essays by Irene Maunder, Eileen Hynes, and Flora Sidney Woolf; Drawing by Dorothea Morse, and a Photograph by J. L. Saxby, are held over. They will be published as soon as possible.

A SUMMER EVENING.

By JANE SHAW BLAIKLEY (aged 15).

Awarded the Second Prize for Drawing in the Second Class.

PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

THE SIXTH GRAND ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIZE COMPETITIONS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS BY READERS TO "OUR READERS' OWN REALM."

THE popularity of this department of the magazine increases steadily. I shall be pleased at all times to receive and consider suggestions for this department from my girls for whose benefit it is designed. Diplomas of Merit will be presented to those who do not actually win prizes, but who are especially deserving of mention. The Prize-winners' efforts will, in all cases, be published, and, when possible, their portraits, also. The Editor will also be at liberty to use any of the contributions that may receive Honourable Mention, if she can find room for some of these. *The rules given must be strictly adhered to; contributions where they are not observed will be disqualified.* On page v of advertisements will be found a coupon marked A, which must be filled up and sent with the competitors' contributions in the Competitions Nos. 1 to 5, inclusive.

The Editor will select the Prizes in each case after asking the competitor to state the nature of the goods preferred.

PARTICULARS OF COMPETITIONS.

1.

For girls over 16 and not over 25 the first chapter and the last of a novel, the rest simply blocked in.

For girls under 16, a short story on any subject they please.

Length from 1,000 to 1,500 words.

PRIZES.

FIRST CLASS (girls under 25 and not under 16). One guinea for the best, and 10s. 6d. for the next best.

SECOND CLASS (all girls under 16), 10s. 6d. for the best, and 7s. 6d. for the next best.

2.

For the best original drawing. Competitors are not limited to any subject. The drawing may be of a figure, or figures, of a head, or of an animal, a landscape, seascape or flowers. The drawing may be in pencil, pen and ink, Indian ink, line, or wash, but *must not be in colour*.

CLASSES AND PRIZES.

The same as in Competition 1.

3.

For the best specimen of artistic handiwork. Contributions may be in needlework, poker-work, repoussé, in metal and leather work, "gesso" pottery; anything, in fact, that comes under the heading of artistic handiwork. No limit is fixed as to cost. The prize will be awarded to the contribution showing the finest work or the greatest ingenuity. The prize specimens and those winning Honourable Mentions will be photographed and reproduced in the magazine.

PRIZES.

FIRST CLASS (girls under 25 and not under 16). One guinea and 10s. 6d.

SECOND CLASS (all girls under 16), 10s. 6d. and 5s.

4.

For the best original paper on "Some Humble Folk that I have Met" (by 'humble' people of no importance is meant).

Length of papers not to exceed 750 words.

PRIZES.

FIRST CLASS (girls over 16 and upwards). One guinea.

SECOND CLASS (all girls under 16), 10s. 6d.

5.

For the best verses (of 12 or 16 lines) on the preparations for the Coronation. Competitors may treat the subject humorously or otherwise.

PRIZES.

FIRST CLASS (girls under 25 and not under 16), 10s. 6d

SECOND CLASS (girls under 16), 5s.

GENERAL RULES.

1.—Coupon A entitles any girl, subject to these rules and the restrictions mentioned above, to compete in all or any of the competitions numbered 1 to 5 inc usive.

2.—All MSS. must be written on one side of the paper only, and pinned firmly together in the top left-hand corner. Every MS. must be clearly written and bear the name, address, and class of the competitor on the first page. Instructions for filling up coupons will be found on the coupons.

3.—Drawings should be made on Bristol board, or other white cardboard, or stout white drawing paper, and should be drawn to a size of eight inches by five inches, or larger in proportion.

4.—Every drawing must bear the name, age, and address of the competitor written legibly on the back.

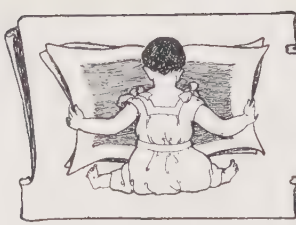
5.—In Competition 3, specimens of artistic handiwork (which should be carefully packed) must have a card attached to them, having legibly written on it name, address, and age of competitor.

6.—All contributions gaining prizes, and all copyright therein, will belong to the magazine; but should the Editor use any important contribution which she thinks specially deserving, some monetary recognition will be made for its use, and the copyright therein reserved.

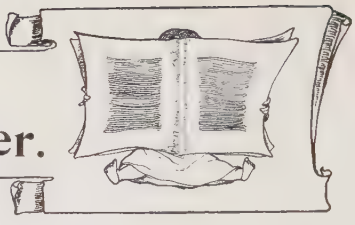
7.—Competitors not winning prizes will have their contributions returned to them on receipt of stamps to defray the postage.

8.—Contributions in the Competitions Nos. 1 to 5, inclusive, must be sent in an envelope, or, in the case of drawings, in a carefully boarded packet addressed to The Editor, THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, Strand, London, and marked on the outside "Our Readers' Own Realm." All contributions must reach the Office not later than March 15th, 1902.

9.—The Editor to be the sole judge of the awards.



The Children's Own Corner.



CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

My Dear Little People,—

A happy New Year to you. It seems such a little while ago that I said to you the very same words—"A Happy New Year"—and you and I and all the world, we have been rushing along ever since as quick as we could go! Through the old year we have gone right into the new one, which begins in a very few days now. I hope that all the little children in this rush through space may have had a very happy time. That they have seen how out of real life spring the fairy tales—the most beautiful fairy tales that were ever invented. First there came the Spring, when the world was all green and golden sunshine, and the song of the birds was heard. When the little flowers came and put their heads out in all sorts of unexpected places. The crocus, and the hyacinth, and the sweet wallflower, with beautiful velvet leaves, singing in perfume their delight in the coming back of the sunshine. All the little children laughed and played in the woods, and in the gardens, and in the rough streets, for joy. Then came the summer, with the big trees all laden with leaves, and the lime smelt so sweetly, and the perfume of the roses and the lilies was the most delicious of all. And in the cool of the evening the children came out and were as merry as the birds. And after they were in bed the great fair moon sailed in the blue sky in which the stars were keeping their vigils, and looked in on the sleeping children.

Then came the autumn, and when it first came the corn was like a sea of gold; the trees were all laden with fruit. The blue sea was tossed by the wind; how it whistled and sang of the beautiful far countries. The children on the shore were digging their castles. They looked towards the ships coming in and going away, and their eyes were full of lovely pictures.

Now has come the winter, and the great trees that were so thick with foliage stand white and still. The snow will shortly be on the ground, making the world look a sinless place. Inside the houses the Christmas trees are lighted—the beautiful Christmas trees, with presents for all who come. All the children, rich and poor, are happy because of that beautiful Christmas time.

And now I have a great many letters from my children, and I must begin to read them. There is one from little "Aline," who writes to me all the way from Switzerland, and wants me to tell her a story all for herself. She says she has no brothers or sisters but her cat, "Mimi," who always comes to meet her as she returns from school. Then here is another letter from "Rosie," who lives in Australia. She tells me of the great lonely land, and "of the way in which there is no rain in it, and the poor animals grow thin." And here is one from Dorothy Winifred Brettany, who lives in Auckland, New Zealand. She is very sorry that she cannot take part in the competitions or puzzles because she does not get the magazine till the month after it is published. And now I am going to let little Dorothy speak for herself:—

"I am eleven years old, and have a sister and two brothers. I am ten years older than the youngest, but he is the baby and only nine months old. My sister is older than I, she is thirteen. We live at Mahurangi; the scenery is very pretty. Before we came here we were at a place called Port Waikato, it was very small, and everybody knew each other. We liked the Maoris, and Elly and I used to ride to see them. Mahurangi Heads is a very pretty place. We are living just where the river flows into the sea: the river at this part is dotted with pretty islands and peninsulas covered with bush. We are near Waiwera, where there are hot mineral springs. Waiwera means hot water. Now I must end my letter."

I wish little Dorothy would tell us more about the Maoris, the native people of New Zealand. Did they relate to her the old stories of their land before the Europeans had come and taken it from them?

Little Irene Tomkins tells me how much she likes The Girl's Realm, and then she goes on to give me the number of her pets and her toys: her dogs, her canaries that feed out of her hand, her bicycle, and her dolls, with which she and her sister have nice plays. "Isabel and Floribel are my favourite dolls. they both send their love to you," she says.

And now I have just space for one more letter, and that is not from a little girl at all, but from who do you think? From Bobs, a dog:

"My Dear Editor,—I was so pleased to see my letter in the Children's Corner, my mistress showed it to me. Thank you so much for putting it in. I send you a photo of myself, it is not a very clean one, but it is the only one I have left. My mistress tried to throw it across the stream to someone on the other side and it fell in but was rescued. I have been having lessons lately in learning to go to heel. I don't like it at all, and the other day I ran away, but when I got hungry I came home and my mistress gave me a good scolding. There is a little kitten living here called 'Little John,' it is a nice little creature, and we are rather friendly, but its mother is a very bad cat. I must stop now, dear Editor, as my paw feels weary. My mistress sends you her love, so do I.—Bobs."

Pearl sends me a delightful letter, part of which I must quote:

"I have got an idea in my head which I think might be successful. I have over a hundred books of all kinds which have been given me at different times, as I'm awfully fond of reading."

"I am going to find out all the people I can in our parish who are ill, or cannot afford to buy books, and send them any of mine they like."

Good bye my dear little people,

Your loving friend,

The Editor.

BY THE EDITOR.

SOME OF MY GIRLS' PROBLEMS.

My dear Girls,—By the time this is being read, if I may venture on the Hibernicism, you would be reading nothing at all. You would be thinking of Christmas and the annual merry-making. I do not mind in the least, and I am very glad to be neglected for so good a reason. We ought to keep up the spirit and the custom of annual merry-making by all means in our power. In a strenuous age we want now and then to escape from ourselves, and to lay aside for a time that ever-increasing burden of the sense of duty and the sense of responsibility which tends to crush us. All the hard-working nations have had their periods of entire self-forgetfulness, and have felt the better for them. The Roman Saturnalia, though it ran into excess for which there was really no necessity whatever, was in the main an attempt of a great prosperous people to escape from its burden of cares. And just in proportion as those cares and duties were heavy and oppressive so were the diversions light and frivolous by which the people tried to cast them off. Nothing was too foolish for a Roman in this period of Saturnalia, and nothing is too foolish for a well-conducted mind in the Christmas revels. Age puts on the manner of infancy and a whole company is, as it were, under a heavy penalty not to exceed ten years of age. A reasonable Christmas is something of a contradiction in terms. I admit, where no young people are present, and that when the habitual tenour of life does not involve much stress, Christmas will be like any other time, and its beef and pudding may be regarded as no more than the accident of a bill of fare. But in a general way what a delightful thing it is to see the statesman and the lawyer, the doctor and the man of business, all trying to hark back to that age of childhood when they lived just for the joy of living without a thought of what was to come after. A wisely ordered Christmas is therefore the one that in a deeper sense is not ordered at all. It is just one delicious day-dream of fairyland. The motto written over the door for all those who know how to read invisible writing should be "All worry abandon ye who enter here." They are to lay down all the worries that beset them at the approach of Christmas Eve. Then, as the kindly curtain of night fell, they would be in the new old world of sweet thoughts, generous impulses, and happy health-giving foolishness of manners and deportment. Be assured that the time that follows when the burden of care is resumed will be all the better for this break, and the sternest and the strongest will face their fate the better from this momentary escape from the overwhelming cares of its responsibilities. So at my Christmas gathering I will have a little child solemnly installed in the seat of honour as King of the Revels. He might if you like be one of those kings who reign but do not govern. Kindly elders would assist him in all the labours of the state, but it would be understood that the spirit in which those were undertaken were his and his alone.

And now I have done with my Christmas reverie and return to my girls' letters and problems. These are plentiful, and my table is strewn with questions that turn on every-day difficulties and on knotty points that are difficult to decide. Some of my girls write to assure me that over these problems they have greatly pondered and asked advice, but they have failed to get the help they need. Others ask me not to give their names. Some of these questions turn on the relationship of engaged couples. I do not like these questions. They are somewhat out of the province of The Girl's Realm, but one or two I must take notice of. "A. G." asks: If the man she cares for is an Infidel what is she to do? She is an orphan, her father was a clergyman, a man it would seem of very simple faith. "Religion" she says "is very dear to me, not for its own sake only but because it is a tie between my father and me. If I marry this man, whom I love, I shall sunder my relationship with my father and with my happy childhood." This is a difficult question to answer, and one which I would not take up, but "A. G." asks me to forgive her for not giving her name and address, and I do not like to seem to neglect her question because I cannot write privately. If I were "A. G." I would ask some clergyman, or some one who has the religious question very much at heart, and who at the

same time is not lacking in human sympathy, and put the case before him. The young man may be going through a spiritual crisis, has got into a tangle, and is unable to discover his way out. If "A. G." cares for him very deeply, and her soul is absorbed in contemplating the beautiful relationship between heaven and earth, will she not be able to win him over to her way of thinking? She ought to be quite certain, however, of her own position. There is no loneliness like the sense of spiritual loneliness. I should be very glad to hear from her as to how she has solved this all important question.

"MARY" asks me: "A girl, the daughter of poor parents, who is engaged to be married to a young man of wealth, accidentally overheard a conversation in which her intended husband is mentioned as having been concerned in a very dishonourable affair. She at once makes her presence known to the speakers, and they extract a promise from her that she will repeat to no one what she heard. She feels it impossible to allow her engagement with the young man to continue, though she is still as fond of him as ever. What reason can she give to him and to the family for breaking it off? She cannot tell him she does not love him, and her lips are sealed from revealing the truth."

Mary's friend should never have accepted such a statement on such a condition. The most elementary right of the fiancé is to be heard in his own defence, and if she cannot accord that right to him, she has herself no right to act on a mere hearsay charge. After all, how does she know that the persons in question are not misinformed? It may not be necessary to question their good faith, but they may easily have been deceived by the tittle-tattle of some third party with no interested motive. She should remember that her first duty, whether as a fiancée or as a wife, is to be the guardian of the honour of the person of her choice. If a word is breathed against him, which she at least is expected to believe, she must, both for her sake and for his, insist upon giving him every opportunity of reply.

"Radix," writing for a dear friend, asks: "A girl, who has great musical abilities and has won first-class music honours in the Higher Cambridge, wishes to adopt music as a career. Her people are opposed to the scheme. Ought she to forego her wish? Her father is a German, and is deeply imbued with the German idea that a woman is only fit to make the home comfortable. Her mother is incapable of directing a household. The girl is the eldest daughter, and there are three younger children. She has the offer of a musical education. Is it her duty to accept or to obey the wishes of her family?"

This is a most difficult question to answer in THE GIRL'S REALM, though not so difficult to answer at the tribune of conscience. No third party can or ought to say to a child, "Disobey your parents." There are cases, however, in which a child may be justified in taking such a course with the old and time honoured motive of the promotion of the greatest good to the greatest number. Radix's friend must decide this for herself. No other, certainly no stranger, can do it for her. Is she quite sure that she has laid her case fully and fairly before her father without temper and without fear?

One more problem. Puella writes: "I am a girl at a large public school, and for the last four years I have had for my great friend 'A.' Some eighteen months ago an unpleasant incident occurred. Some important examination papers were tampered with in the head mistress's room on the night before an important scholarship was competed for. The closest inquiries followed, but the culprit was never discovered. Now matters have changed. A rather unpopular girl, 'B,' has secured the friendship of 'A,' and I find second fiddle hard to play. All at once and unexpectedly the knowledge has come to me from an absolutely reliable source, that 'B,' my friend's chum, is the offender of eighteen months ago. What am I to do? If I persuade myself that it is only fair to 'A' to let her know the true character of the girl she has chosen for her friend, how am I to be sure that personal prejudice or jealousy, perhaps, has not blinded me?"

Puella has answered herself. Nothing is more difficult in the way of mixed motives, than to know when the real self ends and the sense of public duty begins. Then, after all, is Puella absolutely sure of her information. Her informant may herself have been misinformed. In any case the duty of denunciation lies with the one from whom the information comes. If she does not think it proper to act upon it why should Puella assume the obligation? Is Puella quite certain that the information has not been given to her because it was supposed that her natural resentment at the loss of her friend might make her a willing instrument of private vengeance? Puella's problem belongs rather to the one on friendship that we discussed in my last chat, and about which I have received an interesting letter from "Petronella," in which she says: "I have seen a great deal of friendship both at school and at home and I cannot help thinking that boys are not altogether wrong when they say girls' friendships are all rubbish. It is generally very 'thick' while it lasts and it doesn't last long. There is seldom any idea beyond ordinary companionship and mutual interest, no higher bond or wish that both should with mutual assistance rise higher. I do not mean to say that I never saw a real friendship, for there certainly were one or two that thoroughly deserved the name, and lasted."

Many of my girls constantly ask me to tell them of books to read and to think about. But every month brings its own budget of letters to answer, of questions to reply to, of perplexities to discuss, and no time is left me to accede to their request. Here, however, is a little birthday volume, made up entirely of quotations from Rosa N. Carey's delightful stories. It is edited by her friend Helen M. Burnside, and is full of the most suggestive words about every phase of a girl's life. I think you can find no better friend to consult in your joys or in your difficulties than Miss Carey, and she never appears to better advantage than in this little manual. A happy New Year, my dear girls.

Your affectionate friend,

THE EDITOR.

"LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD."

From a Photograph by LAFAYETTE, LTD.

"AT A TOUCH FROM JOHN, THE LARGE GREY BROKE INTO A CANTER . . . LETITIA HELD TIGHTLY TO THE OLD MAN'S COAT TAILS."

From an original drawing by M. TOURTEL.

See "WHEN LETITIA RIDES ABROAD" (*p.* 308).

AN OLD-FASHIONED BORDER.
The Garden of Hursley Park.

A CHAT WITH MR. F. MASON GOOD,

The Famous Garden Photographer.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

Illustrated from Photographs by F. Mason Good.

Gardens and gardening is a very wide subject —for it is just as large as taste itself. There are two main schools, the natural, and, what may be called for want of a better name, the classical, just as there are in literature, just as there are in art. In fact these divisions in one form or other run through all things. The classical is and always has been seen at its best on the Continent, especially among the Latin peoples. The natural style is generally seen at its best in this country. There is the greatest difference between them. In the great Italian and the great French gardens of the past, and even of the present, you have the garden laid out in a vast geometrical plan. It is in squares, in oblongs, in circles, with radiating lines, and it is plentifully adorned with urns and statues. The flowers do not even pretend to grow as they please—they are not much more than ornamental incidents of the great plan.

Le Nôtre, the famous French gardener of the time of Louis XIV., following the Italians, brought this art to its highest point, and his finest example is to be seen at Versailles. The garden of the Luxemburg in Paris and the old garden of the Tuileries are other good examples of the same style. You could sit down in gardens of this sort, on seats symmetrically arranged for the purpose, but except in

THE DUKE'S GARDEN.

The beautiful Garden of Belvoir Castle, the Ancestral Seat of the Duke of Rutland.

the large stretches of green sward at Versailles you would never think of sitting on the grass. The very trees are cut to bring them into harmony with the general scheme. They are squares and cubes and pyramids of foliage, and they are as rigorously governed as the people who walk under them.

This style prevailed extensively in France until Marie Antoinette broke away from the tradition with the English garden at Trianon. Here, although there was still plenty of art as there is in an English garden, it was the art that followed nature. There was the unforeseen at every step—the paths wound about seemingly at their own sweet will, the straight line and the formal vista were unknown. It was all a delicious confusion of shady alleys, of murmuring brooks, of giant oak and beech, of beds of flowers that seemed to be natural growths, of the wild free stretch of pasture land. There, the Queen and her court played at shepherd life. A good part of the ground was laid out as kitchen garden, and they worked at it and persuaded themselves that they enjoyed the wild freedom of the woods. The meadows were what the stage carpenters call "practical," and real cows chewed the cud there and yielded their produce to the real dairies that were hard by, with real ladies of the bedchamber as sham milkmaids.

Of course the French being the essential artists that they are could not help carrying this too far, and the pastoral part of it was something that did not belong to the real English conception. With us the garden, while it is a thing of art, still belongs to the art that cleverly follows nature. Our landscape gardeners take account of the accidents of the ground as they find them, and try to suggest that nature did it all.

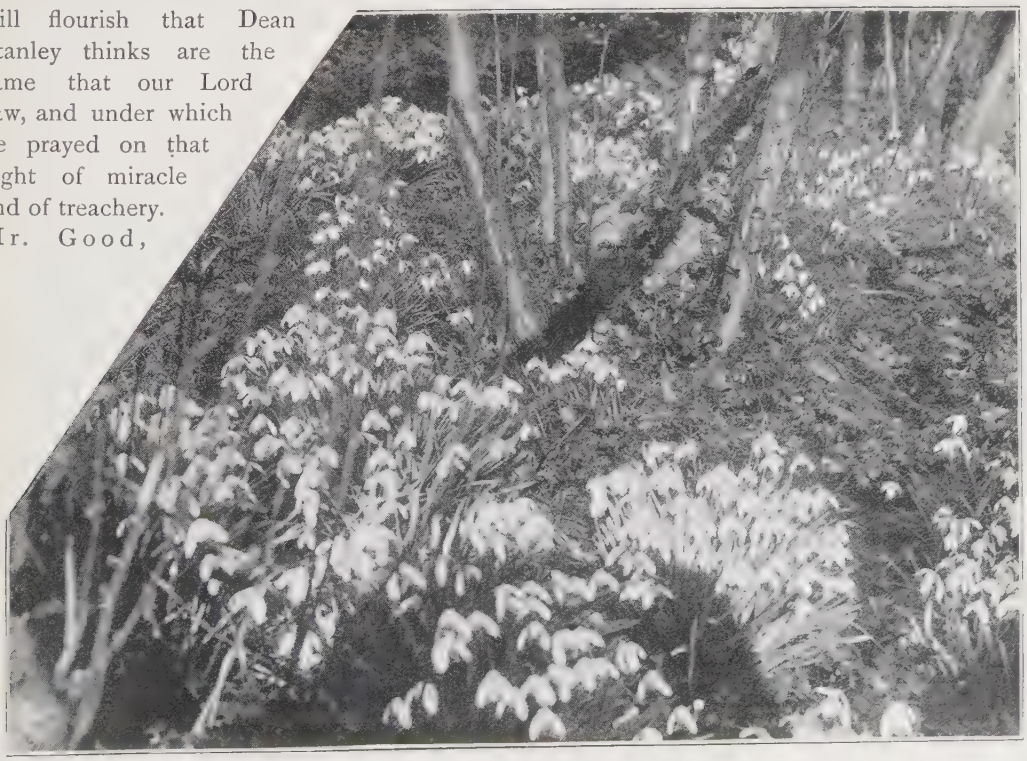
The finest modern examples of the English style abroad is in the exquisite little Parc de Monceau in Paris, a gem of landscape gardening which would be perfect but for the row

of columned ruins, which are an embarrassing heritage of the old classic style. But the best examples are found in the private grounds in England. It is impossible to exceed the beauty of the garden at Clifton Hall, the moat garden at Blickling, the hillside garden at Clevedon Court, and a hundred others that might be named.

The other day I had a talk with Mr. F. Mason Good, who understands the charm of those old gardens as few understand it, and who has photographed many of them. Among the collection had strayed a photograph of the garden of Gethsemane, a relic of one of his journeys. The representation of the quiet space, at the gate of which a monk is sitting reading in the sunshine, is curiously real. Between the gnarled olive trees we catch glimpses of the city set upon a hill—the Jerusalem of sacred memories. There are the altars erected by Catholics marking the progress of the Lord on his Via Dolorosa. From the St. Stephen's Gate to the top of the Mount of Olives the trees still flourish that Dean Stanley thinks are the same that our Lord saw, and under which he prayed on that night of miracle and of treachery. Mr. Good, speaking of that memorable journey, noted the lack of grass in the Holy Land. He also told me how he took this view by the wet process. In the tropics this was not an easy task; and it took, by reason of the toil, so much time that it was not possible to do more than take two or three places in one day.

"I was a mere boy," he told me, "when I first took up photography. My father was a well-known City chemist, and he wished me to go on with his profession. I did not care for it. I wanted to do something with my hands. Something that I could see, as it were, growing under them. Photography was far from being in the advanced stage that it is now. I got a small machine and I began to use it. Holidays were my days of enchantment. I would go up into a loft with my future brother-in-law and practise the great art. He was rather a 'don' at it."

What hours of absorption these were, how much the two lads spoilt, how much they learnt by their failure, how well they succeeded!



"ALL THE JOY OF SPRING-TIME WAS IN THAT LITTLE SPACE."

They got up before dawn, they were all day at work, they forgot their meals, they were covered with acids, and all the traces of the process. Athletic sports were nothing to them, the world outside of photography meant nothing.

At last the day came when recognition awaited Mr. Good. He was then twenty-one, and apprenticed to his father to be a chemist. A celebrated doctor had heard of him and of his craze for photography. He saw some of his work. "He came over to ask me," said Mr. Good, "to go with him on a long voyage over the Atlantic, over to South America, to the other side of the Cordilleras, to photograph the quinine trees in the forest of Huanuco."

THE BEAUTIFUL HOLLYHOCK.

This was a tempting offer. It meant freedom from drudgery, it meant the open air, the happy untrammelled life of Nature, and the joy of watching her and of arresting her moods. But was the offer one likely to be of permanent benefit to the lad? There was hesitation and discussion. The fact that it was the quinine trees that were to be photographed weighed much with Mr. Good's father.

At last the young man got permission to set off, and then came the fuss of preparation, of getting the best machines, of laying in stores of all that was necessary for the great experiment.

"We got off at last," said Mr. Good; "and the night we got to Lima there was a terrible earthquake. There had not been such a one for many years. Later when I came home I heard how the reports in the papers had frightened all my people. But nothing interfered with my happiness."

Mr. Good dwelt upon the enchantment of that forest experience—the stillness of the dense wood, the strange trees and their marvellous shapes. It was the first time he had had the chance of spending days and even nights in the heart of Nature. He resolved never to be parted from her again, never to choose for his profession an occupation that would be servitude.

When he came home he showed the photographs he had taken in the silent forest and the quaint towns to various publishers. He soon got the offer to go on another journey. The Holy Land and Syria were his first destinations.

"It took forty-two days at that time to reach Hebron, the town we had arranged to get to, by the Eastern Route, after a two days' stay in Petra. We were the first travellers who had reached it for twenty-five years. The Turks would not allow any one to pass through, but the embargo had just been removed, and we got a splendid send-off, and a warm greeting."

Mr. Good has travelled through Europe, and over the Holy Land, always sent there by a firm to illustrate some book of travel. He told me of many adventures. Then we came back to the subject of my article, "Beautiful Gardens, and how to Photograph them."

"It is a difficult profession," he said; "there

THE DAME'S GARDEN.
Dr. Playfair's, Winchfield, Hants.

A JUNE ROSE GARDEN.
Mr. H. Tate's at Downside, Leatherhead.

is no royal road to photography. The early morning is the time for it, with its clear shadows and sharp lights. You must get up before dawn and be at work till sunset. Sometimes I rise before four in the morning to get to my garden." He told me of exquisite tramps he had taken through a sleeping world with Nature awake. The dew on the grass, the sky whitening with the dawn, light although the sun had not yet risen. The day cool and fresh as if with a new creation. Then came the witchery of colour and sound—the rose-red clouds in the east, the twitter of the birds, and a flutter of wings, then a ray of sunlight like a magic wand falling athwart the landscape.

"It is still quite early when I get to my garden, and there I work until sunset. Sometimes my work is simply to wait for the moment of perfect stillness. The slightest breeze that comes and agitates the petals of the flowers, rustles the leaves of the trees, spoils my effect. That moment of perfect quietude, how I have lain in wait for it! Sometimes it comes when you have just started, sometimes it takes a long time, and you are in despair ever to get the necessary quiet. The strain of waiting for that privileged moment is very great—but when it does come what amends it makes, how it recompenses the artist."

Mr. Good told me of many exquisite gardens. The garden about Belvoir Castle, belonging to the Duke of Rutland, is a splendid example of a Ducal enclosure. Trees of every kind grow, now in dense masses, now in lighter clusters following the undulating lines of the landscape. Here you find nature working with art. All the rare shrubs and trees flourish there, mingling with those that grow in our climate, and all are so artistically distributed that each seems to fit into its proper place and to harmonise with the other. On an elevated plateau a seat is placed overlooking the landscape. You behold now a sea of foliage, now a clearance, then you catch a vista of terraces, shrubberies, statues, fountains, grassy lawns and flower beds. Through

THE BEAUTIFUL WILD GARDEN OF WISLEY RIPLEY.
Here everything is allowed to grow as it likes.

ANOTHER VIEW OF THE WILD GARDEN.

"Whatever things are lovely is the only condition asked of the flowers, the trees and graceful shrubs planted in this wild garden."

this gracious vision flit birds of many climes, and home birds, and the pretty wildings of the woods. There, in a nook in the park known as "The Duke's Garden," where statues stand amid the entrenching trees and seem to guard the silence, the pathway winds through flower beds and grassy lawns. The garden of the Duchess is of a lighter character. There are more flowers and of greater variety, the trees are less massed together.

"I never saw such bedding as at Belvoir Castle," said Mr. Good. Mr. Tate's rose garden surpasses all he has ever seen, containing, as it does, many acres of roses. It measures fifty acres. No other blossom is allowed to interfere with the glory of the Queen of Flowers. Every kind of rose is to be found therein. The great paths of grass show up the splendours of the tints. It is guarded by an arch covered with blossoms, and it is enshrined by great trees. You might wander in that space of beauty and see every rose that has figured in poetry or in romance, that has borne the name of one loved by its grower, or of some beauteous queen. Roses of the East and roses of the West, sweet roses that have cheered the humblest garden, great roses that have come from some distant clime:

"I sometimes think that never blows so red
The rose as where some buried Cæsar bled."

"Yellow roses, white roses of holy memories."

"Her robe, ungirt from clasp to hem,
No wrought flower did adorn;
But a white rose of Mary's gift,
For service meetly worn."

He told me of many other memorable gardens—of a great fruit garden, whose long, straight path, bordered on either side with aromatic plants, reminds us of the old monks' garden where they grew simples and herbs. The walls are all covered

THE SACRED GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

"Beyond, between the gnarled olive trees, we catch glimpses of the city set upon a hill—the Jerusalem of sacred memories."

with pears and peaches, with plums and figs, the grapes are trellised above. He told me of the lovely Dame's Garden that belongs to Dr. Playfair, of the mistletoe that so seldom grows on sacred oaks, but is plentiful on the old apple trees. It is still found in abundance at Strathfield Park, the Duke of Wellington's place, but it grows far above our heads, and is quite out of reach. He spoke of Kingsley's garden at Eversley, and of the famous pine trees that grow on the lawn.

Lastly he told me of the famous wild garden near Weybridge that belongs to Mr. Wilson, a Scotchman. Another notable one is at Wisley Ripley. "Everything is allowed there to grow as it likes. When you are in it you can imagine what the Garden of Eden was like." A bridge spans the stream edged with lovely plants that grow on the water's edge. Then we enter the great garden, and, whether it be spring, summer, autumn, or winter, we have beauty. Wild flowers abound therein, the blue hyacinths and pale anemone, the primrose, the daffodils, the violets, seem to rain over it in spring, acres are purple with their bloom, lilies of the valley and forget-me-nots are happy there. How graceful is the foxglove rising from the ferns; the travellers' joy, the honey-suckle, the sweet briar, all come in their turn and with attendant blossoms.

Then there are the flowers that have been imported, the oxslip, and polyanthus, the clematis, the spireas, the lupin, the rhododendron, the climbing roses, and a thousand other blooms. They grow in great spaces spreading where they like, unchecked by the hand of the gardener. Whatever things are lovely is the only condition asked of the flowers, the trees and graceful shrubs planted in that wild garden. The glad song of the birds, the scent of the sweet briar and the honey-suckle, the murmur of the foliage, the

flitting of the butterflies and of the myriad creatures who thrive there undisturbed, the delicious earth perfumes, all seem to say "it is good to be here."

There are lovely gardens, great and small, dotted all over England: gardens that bring with them high associations of historic renown; gardens that tell of the loving care of their owner. Alfred Austin has written of "The Garden that I love."

"Are they easy to photograph?" I asked. "No," answered Mr. Good. "It is the long waiting that is trying. Snap-shots are no good in the garden—you want a long focus lens. But there are many things that ladies can do indoors pertaining to garden work. There are the flowers to be photographed. Lilies and azaleas, the lupin and the cactus, the tube-roses. But what is the use of naming a few when all are beautiful—all lend themselves to photography?

"To do this teaches the artist to see the loveliness of nature, the finish of her work, its daintiness. It is by taking up these delicate studies that you get to understand them, that you acquire the trained eye of the photographer for beauty."

Mr. Good was enthusiastic over all that could be learnt by these individual studies, and he showed me many pages of flowers that he had done. There was a corner of a wood filled with snowdrops, all the joy of spring-time was in that little space; there were ferns that seemed to be clashing their leaves for very joy, and there was a corner of happy weeds. Here were chrysanthemums, and there were sweet peas, looking like quivering little birds on the wing resting a moment, and here were roses dropping their heads as for very lassitude of enjoyment.

Well, indeed, could Mr. Good say "the photographer sees beauty where others do not perceive it." He is accustomed to look for it and it reveals itself to those who seek for it.

Looking at Mr. Good's photographs of gardens and of flowers, we catch, while the dark days of winter are still with us, flashes of summer glory, and see again with "that inner eye which is the bliss of solitude" some of those heavenly visions with which the earth is blessed.

A CORNER OF WEEDS—NOTHING BUT BEAUTIFUL WEEDS.

When Letitia Rides Abroad.

By MAUD STEPNEY RAWSON.

Author of "A Lady of the Regency."

Illustrated by M. Tourtel.

I.

An ivory and brown spaniel raced through the grounds of Blue Bridge House, near Wantage, leapt the stile beyond which lay a footpath to the stables, and, panting, laid a lady's whip with a gold handle at the feet of old Coachman John. It was the sure sign that Letitia would ride abroad that day.

The frost had suddenly given. Five days after Christmas all the springs on the Berkshire downs were hurrying to the river, rushing in the deep ruts of the farm cart tracks across the hills, playing havoc with the roadways whenever they out-swelled their banks and split up into fairy streams, dragging chalk and snow and gravel away with them. After two days of storm it cleared. The south-west wind blew more gently. There was enough of him left to dry the turf and the roads, and draw the clouds aside gaily, to let in upon the hills and valleys light and colour. And yet after all this complaisance on the part of the deities of the sun and wind, Squire Bolt of Blue Bridge House grumbled and raved because, he said, that a New Year's Day without snow and frost was positively indecent. His stablemen winked. His wife smiled pityingly, and his daughter Letitia, who stood in mortal fear of him, actually patted his hand; and though he was tied to his chair, with his bandaged leg on another (rich man's gout, as everyone knew), the Squire did not resist this extremely demonstrative act. For Letitia alone understood what he felt at losing his hunting season. She was her father's daughter, she could ride almost anything on four legs, and he had taught her to hate the frost as only a hunting man can hate it. At the moment she was specially glad that the wind was gentle and the sky so gay, for she was to attend an important function at Basildon Manor, by the Thames, and the snow would have made this impossible, for the shortest way was across the down where no coach could go, either in frost or thaw, and she knew well that to turn out the heavy family coach in snow time and take it the longer way by the roads, would only result in the whole vehicle being stuck in drifts.

She opened her window on New Year morning, laughed to the sun, and came down gaily to breakfast. But sorrow awaited her.

Mrs. Bolt had such a terrible attack of the tic that her pretty plump face was like an undecided egg, so that the strings of her dainty morning cap would scarcely tie under her chin. Here was a dilemma! The function at Basildon was a very special affair. The friend of Letitia's childhood, Sarah Garland, her senior by two years, had just been asked in marriage by the eldest son of Lord Justice Romany, and in consideration of her position as the only child and heiress of Colonel Garland (so distinguished at Vimiera), the betrothal was to be formally announced to a circle of old friends and kinsfolk, at a great gathering on New Year's Day, the proceedings ending with a large ball. Letitia was to be the special guest among the happy Sarah's own cronies, and Sarah had declared that if Letty were absent she would postpone the ceremony of the betrothal, as she had no mind to go and give her word to a strange young man, never so charming, on whom Letty had not passed judgment satisfactorily. It was bad enough that her mother was ill, but that in addition one of the carriage horses was lame was harder than anything to bear. There was no other animal to

take its place. The old dappled grey was too out of date now for anything but slow field work. It was five years since Letitia had even ridden it. She was eighteen now, and round, and of middle height, and her strong young wrists wanted something more to do than dangle a slack rein on the neck of the old dapple which poked its head. Then as to the hunters—the chestnut was laid up, the bay cob was too small for coach work, and the Squire's own particular heavy-built black hunter was sacred. There remained only the spare carriage grey, the sound one, with the high-sounding title of "Crusader." When the stableman saw Letitia's spaniel racing down the back-avenue to the yard with her riding whip in its mouth, he was therefore puzzled, until a servant came to explain that the Squire wished John to ride the fat grey to Basildon, carrying the young lady behind him.

Meanwhile Letitia, swallowing her chagrin at having to share a horse with anyone, was fully determined that Squire Bolt's daughter should not be caught by critical Romany guests hanging like a doll to the belt of her father's coachman, and determined that she would dismount ere she reached the Garlands' front door.

She was equally determined that Miss Bolt should make a dazzling impression on society at Basildon, and between pride and mortification, and the anxiety of new clothes, she went downstairs with a very agreeable pink colour in her cheeks.

Her spaniel played his pretty trick to the finish as usual, trotted forward, and laid her whip at her feet. From right and left wing of the square hall, doors opened and heads peeped, for the maids wished to see the new finery. The Squire hobbled out to roar injunctions, and Mrs. Bolt watched her daughter from the gallery of the landing above.

"Prance a bit, Letty," laughed the Squire, "don't behave as if you were in cloth and top-boots." For Letty had hunched up her lovely dress and hidden it all away under the grey pelisse of her mother.

She threw the pelisse back proudly upon an admiring gurgle from the heads at the doors. The sun shone full upon her through the high latticed windows. She stood against the background of oak and armour, like a blush rose freshly plucked and brought into some museum of feudal relics. Warm rose was the colour of her lutestring under-gown, and white gauze the transparent portion over it, while a little pink wreath was set in the side of her hair, which her mother's maid had done so elaborately. Her rosy shoes were in a silk bag, and she wore for the ride warmer ones of velvet. A little thread of silver, a narrow riband of black velvet, and two lines of pink piping scrolled a satin border two inches wide round the neck, hem, and front of her gauze over-gown.

She made the tour of the hall twice while maids and men looked on. Her spaniel barked and made onslaughts on her hem (it was her first ball-skirt), the cockatoo screamed derision, and the cuckoo in the clock stayed out half a second longer than was correct. That broke the spell. The maid wrapped the pelisse about her; the cook ran forward with a large cup of hot spiced ginger wine, and coachman John swung himself, puffing, on to the back of the enormous grey. As the old pillion that Letty's mother had used was lost, the only substitute was a little saddle that had been used on the back of the old pony in Letty's childhood. When she saw it she turned up her nose.

"I shall look like a French doll," she cried, "and as for sitting properly——"

"All you have to do, Letty, is to take care of your gown," called her mother from the gallery; "the riding is John's affair."

"We will strap you on, Letty, for fear you slip," laughed her father, which sent Letty scornfully bounding, rose silk, lace petticoats, shoe satchel, and all into her saddle. They pulled the long pelisse well down over her pretty feet, her hood was securely fastened over the grand coiffure, and the trio started amid kerchief wavings and salutations.

As she passed the red brick gates the fat spaniel saw the sweet impertinent profile of his mistress clearly defined against the madder background of winter woods. Her head was held very high.

II.

Now, the great dinner at Basildon Manor

was at three o'clock; but a little before two there was to be a formal and impressive family ceremony, an interchange of posy rings, a regular hob-nobbing of Sarah Garland's in-laws-elect and her relations; with the self-conscious Sarah as the central topic of discussion.

"Exactly like counting up the points of a colt," said Letitia flippantly to her mother; for which her mother had reproved her. However, Letty was to be at this family conclave before the dinner and ball, and so, as the distance to be covered was some fifteen miles, it was needful to start about noon. John had his orders not to go beyond a slow trot, so that it was some time before they reached the long stretch of down where they were to leave the roads and take to the bridle paths.

"What a hunting morning, John!" said Letitia.

"Prime, missie," said John. "There's a spinney where I have had many a good time in my young days." He jerked his whip in the direction of a clump on the right.

Letitia sighed.

They proceeded slowly over a stretch of stubble; then came a broad slope of plough, then a sheep fold and a wood. The wind and sun poured colour upon the earth, the plough was deep purple, the fallow land deep blue in the hollows where the clouds sailed. The slopes on the Oxfordshire bank of the river lay under a delicate coverlet of fields, fields of cobalt and of pinkish red, and sienna and grey green, with deep patches of indigo marking wood and plantation, while white ribands of roads trickled from the heights to the misty lowlands.

"It is a clean-feeling day," said old John, and he brisked the grey "Crusader" into a regular trot.

They had left the edge of the plough and were passing over the stubble to the wood. Through the wood Letitia kept her head low, and her face was wet with splashes from the branches when she emerged. They looked down upon a superb sight as they crossed the great Roman road, the ancient Port Way, and took to the turf again, leaving Wantage behind them. To their right was the old Saxon hamlet of West Hendred, to the left the sister village of the same name. Between the spurs of Park Hill and Goldbury Hill they could see across the broad valley that lies almost at right angles to the river. The opposite wall of it, a high backbone of down, marked another ancient track, the old Ridge Way, and under its further slope Grim's Dyke and the Icknield Way ran from west to east till the Compton and Blewbury Hills turned their course southwards. A network of undulations, gentle billows of arable and turf, broke the stretch between Port Way and Ridge Way. It seemed as if the wing of a colossal swallow had passed over the land, so gracious and swift were the curves that melted into one another. And the stout grey jogged along bravely, scarcely conscious of his double burden. As they came to East Hendred Common a long note from a hill on the right made Letitia's heart beat. She turned her head sharply and listened. It rang over the downs again, bringing a sense of delicious irresponsibility with it.

"John!" she said.

"Yes miss," said John, sympathetically. "There was a meet at Crab Hall to-day, but I didn't say so, miss, as I thought you'd break your heart not to be there."

"They're coming this way," said Letitia, "that horn was no further than Ginge Brook. Let's see what is doing."

"My orders is a slow trot, miss."

"You can walk if you like, stupid," said Letitia, coaxingly, "but I must see hounds draw the head of this valley; I've missed a good run here every time."

Just then the horn sounded again, but more faintly.

"Get on to the Ridge Way, quick," cried Letitia. "It's a good look out."

So they made steadily for the high land. The trot grew quicker, and Letitia clutched her little satchel tightly. She found it needful now to hold old John's belt, which she had disdained to do on starting. The hunt careered noisily over Ginge Brook and disappeared behind Droveaway Hill. Then silence, except for an irrepressible lark overhead.

"Check," said Letitia judicially. But the hounds worried a plantation by Chalkhill Barn, and then with free tongue set forth down the

"LETITIA CAME DOWNSTAIRS SHYLY, AND STOOD ON THE LAST STEP BUT TWO, PUTTING ON HER GLOVES. SOMEONE WHO HAD WAITED BY THE BIG FIREPLACE STROLLED UP."—(*p.* 311.)

valley under the great ridge just as Letty reached it.

"Now for it," cried Letitia.

"Right, miss," said John, and the grey broke into a smart trot over splendid turf along the great ridge. "They're streaming like a flooded brook," he cried, excitedly. "Never saw a cleaner line in my life, miss."

"Nice field; not too many," said Letty, critically; "and no muffs." Her eye noted some very pretty riding on the part of a gentleman who wore the uniform of some hunt she did not recognise.

"Quicker, John," she urged. At a touch from John the large grey broke into a canter. He was fresh and overfed; the unconventionality of the expedition pleased him. Letitia held tightly to the old man's coat tails. Her silk gown was in jeopardy (she had heard some gathers give already), and she was getting rather too much bumped to enjoy it, but she would not say so, for the fun was just beginning. As the hunt tore up the northern slope of the Ridge Way chain it beheld, a quarter of a mile away, silhouetted against the sky, a fine equestrian group, for old John held his reins like a jockey and belaboured the lumbering grey, and Letty, whose hood had fallen back, was urging on her escort with joyous cries. A long rose-coloured sash riband floated out behind her.

As the hunt streamed in front of him the grey laid back his ears and shook his head. Letitia felt a tremor run through his gigantic frame, and then his clumsy canter broke into a thundering gallop.

"Splendid!" shrieked Letty. "Look out for ruts, John. Oh!" as a slight stumble made her hold her breath. Just then the hunt topped the Ridge and flowed down into the valley.

"We must stick to the Ridge," she cried.

But the grey had had enough of the Ridge. Thirty yards more he kept his way, heedless of the soft deep ruts.

"Look out, John," she cried; "do you want wax to keep you and your saddle together?"

Old John swore steadily under his breath. He would have given his soul for wax a minute later, for a worse stumble and a deeper rut sent him flying off sideways on to the turf, where he pitched on his side and rolled heavily down the further slope.

Then the grey gave himself a gigantic shake, as the long note of the hounds greeted his ear. Conscious of a lightened burden he turned to the right and plunged into the valley below Grim's Dyke with a snort.

In a second's space Letitia apprehended two things—John's injury, her own risk. The reins? She flung herself forward and caught them up just as the grey's heavy hoofs would have blundered into them. She hauled with all her might. Then she knew why old John had sworn so desperately. The obstinacy of the horse infuriated her. She was not Letitia Bolt for nothing. She sat back and tugged, setting her teeth. The grey coolly shook his head, kicked up his heels, and galloped sportively down the slope. Letitia was thinking wildly of poor John lying with his head broken on the Ridge Way. Again she pulled till her wrists were like slim, tight bundles of steel wire, but from her seat far back on the horse she could get but little purchase. The grey snorted once again contemptuously, and away they went. It was a break-neck place, rabbit holes, mole hills, and thorny scrub. She gained on the hunt. At any other time her course over such ground would have been a triumph, but now!

A little shriek of drapery meant a fresh slit in the rose-coloured under-gown; she saw a long strip of pink lutestring hanging from under her pelisse. As for the satchel of shoes, it was a feature of the bright past. She sat back bravely and did the only thing she could, which was to stick on. The gentleman in the unknown uniform saw her tearing down from the Ridge in amazement. "The young woman has shaken off the groom and takes the bit between her teeth, by Gad," called a smart young farmer to his friend. In such a guise, and on such a mount, no one recognised the rider. "Small blame to her," laughed the other.

But the eye of the gentleman in the strange uniform saw further.

"What the dickens—?" he ejaculated, as he watched Letitia.

The pace was furious, the scent breast high. He was a keen sportsman. But the vision of that slight figure in the grey pelisse arrested him. She had no eyes for anything but her own business. She saw nothing but the difficult ground, heard nothing but the mutinous snorting of the grey. The music of the hunt was the dim music of a grotesque nightmare. The pace and tension were terrible. As the grey blundered down a steep hillside over juniper bushes, she was faintly conscious that they reminded her of a cemetery, these black silent miniature cypresses standing on the turf, which was strewn with large white grotesque flints like bleached bones. The hoofs of the grey clattered against them till her teeth rattled with horror.

Below was a deep, wide rabbit warren. She saw the ugly holes. By a miracle she turned the grey's course short of the burrows, and he pounded gaily along the side of the slope now taking an upward direction.

The man who watched from below dashed along the cart track beneath. A ragged dyke, topped with the remains of a stone wall, crossed the down between two pastures. It was Letitia's next obstacle. There was only one place where the bank was slightly broken. Letitia knew the place. It was marked by a big sloe bush. But a gipsy fire had been lit there and the bush existed no more. She shut her eyes and sat back. The grey lolloped on to the dyke and slithered down the other side. The shower of falling stones about his heels only served to excite his pace. "Keep clear of the bog," shouted the rider below. He had marked the chalky swamp as he rode to the meet from the River Valley that morning. Letitia knew the swamp better than he. A horse belonging to her father had broken its back there once after heavy rain. She never forgot it.

She steered the grey marvellously, but scarcely knew the danger was passed. She was thinking of something worse than bog—a chalk quarry beyond Unhill Wood to which she must come very soon. And then . . . ?

Out of what seemed to her a deadly silence came the familiar "Whoop." She passed into a state of secondary consciousness. So there had been a kill. It was a quick concentrated run, she reflected, the sort of run the Squire had taught her to love. Her blurred eyes noted a scarlet and brown mass below on the right. Then her wrists began to feel like those of a rag doll. She saw Unhill Wood, fringed and dark ahead—perhaps hounds would draw that now. It was a good place, and on the lower edge of it was a two-year-old coppice where a whole colony of foxes could sun themselves on such a day as this. . . . Large cover and a fine dog-fox. . . . And a sharp burst—no piffling, no currant jelly— . . .

"Look out for that hedge!" shouted a voice. She was going blindly at it. She heard the thunder of other hoofs now. It was horse against horse; the long beautiful greyhound action of a bay thoroughbred against the plunging gallop of a grey carriage-horse with a strong dash of the Fleming.

Through Unhill Wood, over soft beech leaves and twigs and rings of dead fungus and moss, out again on to spongy turf and a sticky chalky bridle path. Two fields more and then the scar. The rider of the bay thundered closer. He was above her, heading her down to the right. She understood. He gained. He pressed the grey. He was perilously near the edge of the death trap. But his mare kept to her line like a plough holder. Twenty seconds more! Letty could feel the breath of the mare as the grey pulled viciously to the left towards the brink. A rabbit ran across his path and sent him jerking back to salvation. Twenty seconds, and the scar was left behind, and the hill spread out before her—steep, but without flints or holes. The bay came down after her. The grey was the first to crash through a low thin blackthorn hedge, leaving some of her streamers on it. Ahead was a farm lane; into it thundered grey and bay. The farmyard gate was open. The old "Crusader" clattered in and pulled up dead. His rider shot through the door of the barn. The gentleman on the bay was not so lucky; he splashed into a duckpond, for the turn into the yard was unexpected. He caught his horse and ran to the barn. On a truss of straw he found a dazed heap of white and rose colour under a grey pelisse. Letitia sat up.

"Killed," she gasped.

"Indeed, I hope so, Madam," was the cheerful response.

"He has a family," moaned Letitia.

"I hope so madam," said the puzzled young man, "may I hope," he added, gallantly, "that we may chase his cubs before very long, when I trust you will have a fairer chance than you did to-day of using admirable knowledge of the ground?"

"I mean John," she moaned, "poor John!"

The young gentleman's face grew grave. "I will make inquiries at once he said, "meanwhile——"

He broke off abruptly, for the bundle of white and rose colour sank back slowly on the straw.

The group of astonished huntsmen parted at the door of White-Shoot Farm (where hounds had killed), as he carried Letitia indoors. Then he went back to the yard and sent his groom to the Ridge while the hunt swept away to Blewbury.

Letitia came to herself in a strange parlour lit with a blazing fire; her feet were as warm as toast; her head vague and dreamy. There seemed to be voices at the door. A strange woman who looked in gave a little shriek of pleasure.

"Your young lady is better Sir," she said to someone outside. At which Letty's toes grew warmer than ever.

"Thank heaven! said a hearty voice which she did not recognise at once. "May I see her?"

"Is John safe?" called Letty piteously.

The door opened and her friend of the hunting-field entered and bowed.

"John is as well, I understand, Madam, as your doughty steed," he answered, with a reassuring smile. "He is only a little shaken; my man who was out with me has brought news that your servant follows on a borrowed horse. For the rest, I am Harry Gayfield, at your service."

"And I," said Letitia demurely, with the last shred of pride, "am Letitia Bolt." At which the cavalier laughed merrily.

"How dare you?" she said feebly.

I beg your pardon," he replied, "but the coincidence—you understand, my dear young lady. Now pray don't—don't——"

"I shall cry as much as I like," said ungrateful Letitia. . . . "You spoiled my run."

And she kept her word, but not till later on.

Now she pulled herself together and sat up among the cushions to survey him coldly.

"'Pon my word, Mr. Gayfield," she said, impertinently, "we are a nice pair!" She referred him to a mirror opposite. His beautiful buck-skin breeches were green with duck-weed, his pink coat all stained, while the cream colour of his once shining boots was simply invisible. Nevertheless, his handsome face was clean. He surveyed himself steadily, then his eyes travelled over her figure. She lay like a beggar princess in rose-coloured tatters, but the pearls on her neck were not hidden by the old Paisley shawl the farmer's wife had flung round her. His glance rested where it had first fallen, upon Letitia's steady fine eyebrows, and as he looked for that which was just under them he replied sweetly, "Indeed, Miss Bolt, I entirely endorse your charming statement."

She bit her lips and tried to leave the couch. He expostulated. At last he entreated her to allow him to escort her home—the place for runaways!

"Home!" said incensed Letitia, "certainly not! I am going on to a dinner-party and a ball.

"You cannot," said her friend quietly.

"I shall," said Letitia.

"Very well, I will take you," was his answer, "but on one condition. You will have to ride the grey behind me. I cannot allow your servant to play any more pranks."

He was so commanding, so persuasive, that Letitia, whose strength at this moment was of a pie-crust order, collapsed and yielded. When she heard the groom and old John both salute the young gentleman as "My Lord," a terrible embarrassment overcame her. She sat perfectly silent as they travelled down quickly through Streatley to Basildon.

"Four o'clock," she cried, as they caught the Streatley chimes, "and dinner was to be at three!"

"So much the better," said her escort merrily, "for we shall dine tête-à-tête."

"How is that?" said Letitia.

"You see, I, too, am absolutely indispensable to this ceremony. Young Mr. Romany is my college friend. Now you must make all the excuses, for that is the lady's part."

"I am not plausible, like you," answered Letty saucily.

"It is your frankness, Madam, which is so entrancing," replied the cavalier. She knew there was a twinkle in his eye, though she could not even see his cheek twitch from behind.

Had Letitia's spaniel been at Basildon gates he would have seen that her profile drooped with distress as she rode up a lordly avenue of beeches and yew, clinging for very weariness to the coat-tails of a strange gentleman whom she hoped she would never see again, at least, not till after her belated dinner, which was served for her in her room amid delicious confidences from Sarah Garland, and much cossetting from Sarah's old nurse.

It is wonderful what a beauty-bath of warm water will do, into which a skilled hand has mixed in due quantities such things as oil of lilies, melilot, and tops of fennel, fenugreek, and pelletory-of-the-wall, with a handful of violets and another of oris powder to dominate the fragrance. So Letitia bathed, and was refreshed; and her friend's wardrobe, though it held no dream of rose colour and white, yielded a very enchanting amber slip with gold gauze ribbons, in which her looks could not have been better framed.

She came downstairs shyly and stood on the last step but two pulling on her gloves, without courage to enter the withdrawing rooms. Someone who had waited by the big fireplace strolled up. (She did not look up, she knew.) A voice asked if she were going to hide all the evening.

"Letitia is not going to—er—bolt again," said the voice.

She threw back her head and took Lord Gayfield's arm.

"We will dance continually," he said, laughing down at her, "and then no one will be able to tease you with questions." And he hurried her into the ball-room where fiddles and flutes were playing the merriest rigadoon in the world.

* * * * *

Thereafter Letitia rode abroad as before, and rarely unattended. But never again, either as maid or happy wife, would she consent to share a horse with any man—even her dear Gayfield.

From a Photograph by Mrs. Archie Commeline.

"WHEN THE CHILDREN ARE ASLEEP."

MISS CAREY AS A GIRL.

How I Began:

THE STORY OF ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY'S GIRLHOOD.

TOLD BY HELEN MARION BURNSIDE.

IT has given me keen pleasure to be asked to write the story of how Miss Rosa N. Carey commenced her literary life. No interviewing is necessary in this case, for I have lived with the authoress for fully half my life, and hers lies before me like an open book, and though we did not know each other in childhood, our friendship dates from a period some time before she wrote her first novel.

Her literary gift was not in any way inherited, for with the exception of the late Mr. Christopher Riethmuller (a cousin of her father's), author of "Teuton," and other poems, and of two or three novels, no member of her family on either side has ever evinced any creative or imaginative faculty.

She is the youngest but one of a large family of two sons and five daughters. Of the house in London in which she was born, Miss Carey has only the vaguest remembrance, but her childhood was passed in a roomy old-fashioned house with a large garden in the then rustic suburb of Hackney, and of this her recollection is still vivid. She was a delicate child, and her education was, therefore, somewhat perfunctory. She and her youngest sister were left very much to themselves, and the houseful of children led a simple, happy, uneventful life of ordinary work and play. But even then Rosa, though nearly the youngest of the party, was always the originator or leader of their games, the elder instinctively recognising the dominant imaginative powers of the younger. One of the most popular games was to select favourite characters from history or fiction, and try to personify them. Rosa used also to write little plays which they would all act together, and she started a wonderful magazine in which she wrote tales and poems. At this time, however, her parents were not aware of any unusual talent in their little daughter, and she was still left to pursue a desultory and elementary style of education very much at her own discretion.

As a young girl she became very dreamy, spending all her leisure time in reading and writing poetry. Of the latter, indeed, she at that time wrote a good deal, but, unfortunately, none of these early efforts have been preserved, and, as she herself says, she could not now write a line to save her life.

Miss Carey's mother was a somewhat strict disciplinarian. Clever, sensible, and practical herself, she naturally wished that her daughters should also excel in domestic management and plain needlework, and she did not recognise any reason why such employments should be more distasteful to one daughter than to another. But the imaginative and dreamy girl always heartily disliked these tasks, though she

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MISS CAREY'S STUDY CHAIR AND THE TABLE AT WHICH SHE HAS WRITTEN MOST OF HER NOVELS.

conscientiously desired to please her mother, and become as practical as were her less gifted sisters.

The happiest hours of her opening girlhood were those she spent relating tales of her own conception to her sister, as they sat at their needlework under the trees of the shady old garden on summer afternoons, or by the fireside in the winter gloaming, in a spacious room called "the green room," which was the special sanctum of the girls. In this manner nearly the whole of "Nellie's Memories" was verbally told in her early teens, seven years before she began to write it down; thus the vivid characters of the story became to the sisters as familiar friends, and part of their daily life.

It was not until the family removed to South Hampstead that Miss Carey's real school-days commenced. The day of high schools, and of University education for girls was not yet, so she daily attended the St. John's Wood Institute, the best school the neighbourhood could at that time afford. Here she received a good commonplace education, but did not, as she still deeply regrets, pursue any line of study which could prepare her for, or aid her in the literary work which she herself began to feel must be the real work of her life. Neither can she remember that she in any way distinguished herself amongst her fellow students.

It was at this Institute that she formed an acquaintance, which quickly ripened into an enthusiastic friendship, with Mathilde Blind, a girl of great intellectual power and singularly fascinating personality. This friendship was, however, to the great sorrow of both girls, interrupted after a few years by a total divergence of religious opinions. Miss Blind, alas, became a professed follower of the modern school of free-thought, whilst Miss Carey was, and ever has been, a staunch and conscientious Churchwoman. As a matter of course the girls drifted apart, though the old interest in, and affection for each other ended only with the death of Mathilde a few years ago.

About that time my family also became residents in South Hampstead, and I used to meet the friends in my walks, long before I knew either of them personally. They were a noticeable pair, Miss Carey very tall and slim, with her chestnut brown hair worn in low hanging bands, and twisted into a crown of plaits round her small intellectual head, as was the fashion at the time. She had lovely blue-grey eyes with long black lashes under finely-pencilled brows, and she always walked with a swift bird-like movement. Miss Blind was small, dark, and picturesque, with a beautiful face looking out from her mass of dusky hair, which she wore foreign fashion, brushed up-

ward and backward, and falling in a curly wavy cloud about her shoulders. She walked beside her tall companion with a stately little air which sat quaintly on her small figure. The two were always talking earnestly, and when I regarded them wistfully as I passed, I little guessed that one would become one of the most popular of authoresses, and the other rank amongst the most eminent women poets of the Victorian era.

On leaving school Miss Carey was again possessed by a feeling of being rather out in the cold in the home life, and was much discouraged by the failure of her efforts to be a useful and practical member of the household. She therefore made a deliberate resolve to quench her literary aspirations and become more like other girls. In this extraordinary resolution she actually persevered for some years, but of course the potential bent of her mind eventually won the day in this strange conflict with a warped and over-tender conscience. The instinct of genius broke through the trammels of the unnatural repression imposed upon it, and she commenced to write again. She now also began to feel the need of equipping her mind for a literary career by study, and thus, fitfully and slowly, often laying it aside for long intervals, yet carrying on side by side with the actual work a course of reading and self-education, Miss Carey commenced writing "Nellie's Memories." It was at this time I became acquainted with the authoress, and we were soon fast friends. In the early days of our intimacy I was told, and fancied myself, that she was too unobservant to make a good novelist, but I quickly discovered this to be quite a mistaken idea. I can remember on several occasions drawing her attention to some fine effect of light or colour, some picturesque group or figure, or a striking characteristic of face or manner in some individual we met when together, and was surprised at her want of response, but I found out afterwards that nothing ever escaped the glance of those quiet grey eyes, or the comprehensive grasp of her mind. Without appearing to do so she instantly photographed on brain and memory, and faithfully treasured up, anything that could enrich description, or aid her in building up her different characters.

Having come to the final decision that literature was to be her profession, Miss Carey set

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MISS R. N. CAREY AS SHE APPEARS TO-DAY.

up a very high standard for herself. She determined that as she must write she would influence minds only for good, and write only such books as girls might read without harm. That no temptation to increase her own reputation by writing unwholesomely sensational fiction should induce her to swerve from this ambition, and the many who know and love the succession of charming stories which have made her name a household word, will know also how faithfully she has lived up to, and fulfilled her self-imposed mission.

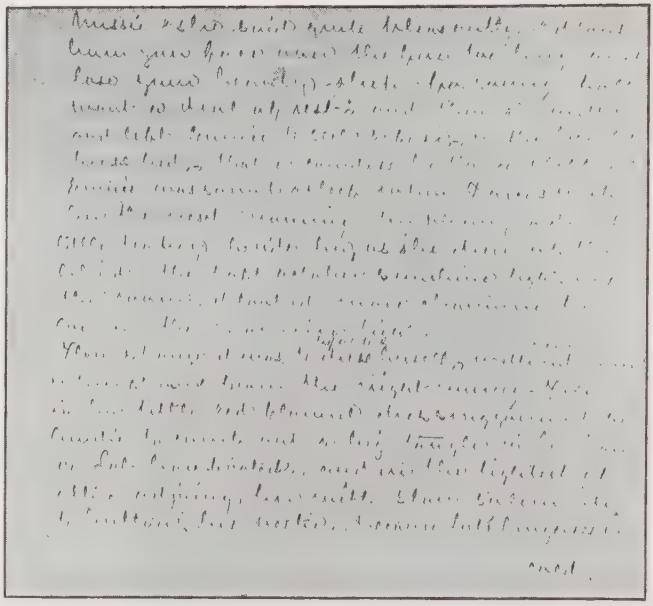


Photo. Russell & Sons.

A SCRAP OF MISS CAREY'S ORIGINAL MS.

A page from Miss Carey's Novel now in the press.

"Nellie's Memories" was unfinished when the great sorrow of her father's illness and death fell upon the young authoress, and it is still a matter of sorrow to the family that he did not live to fully recognise her genius. The first book was, however, well launched before her mother died three years afterwards; and none rejoiced more proudly in the success of her gifted child—surprised as she was to discover that the unpractical member, the ugly duckling, so to speak, of the family, had after all turned out a swan.

As "Nellie's Memories" progressed towards completion, I had been privileged to read the MS. (and I may mention that this privilege has been mine from that day to this—every day, on the completion of the morning's work, it has been submitted to me). My admiration for the story was as strong as the conviction that it must take the world by storm, and great was the joy and triumph when the last sheet was finished, and the word "Finis" written at the end of the bulky MS.

But this period of exultation was quickly followed by one of perplexity: Miss Carey knew no publishers, and in those early days of her life, no authors from whom she could ask introductions. She, however, took heart of grace and carried the precious parcel to Messrs. Tinsley, who, to her deep disappointment, absolutely declined even to read it. Months afterwards a mutual friend mentioned this refusal to Mrs. Westerton of Westerton's Library, who good-naturedly undertook to persuade the publisher to reconsider the matter. In this endeavour she was completely successful, and when she heard that the opinion of Mr. Tinsley's reader was highly favourable, the kind-hearted fairy godmother was so delighted that she hurried away from a wedding festival and drove to Mrs. Carey's house to inform the young authoress of her success.

But dire trouble was yet in store. Miss Carey's very peculiar and characteristic handwriting, more unformed and less distinct in those days than it is now, could not be read by the printers! There were no longsuffering typewriters to come to the rescue, but sisters and friends rallied round, I and even my sister volunteering for the labour of love. We divided up the MS. between us, and daily, for how long a time I cannot now remember, the willing band of helpers sat for hours copying the familiar pages, gaily totalling up the number of sheets completed by each, till all was done, and the great pile again complete. I

have that MS. still, in all its various girlish handwritings; it is one of my most precious possessions.

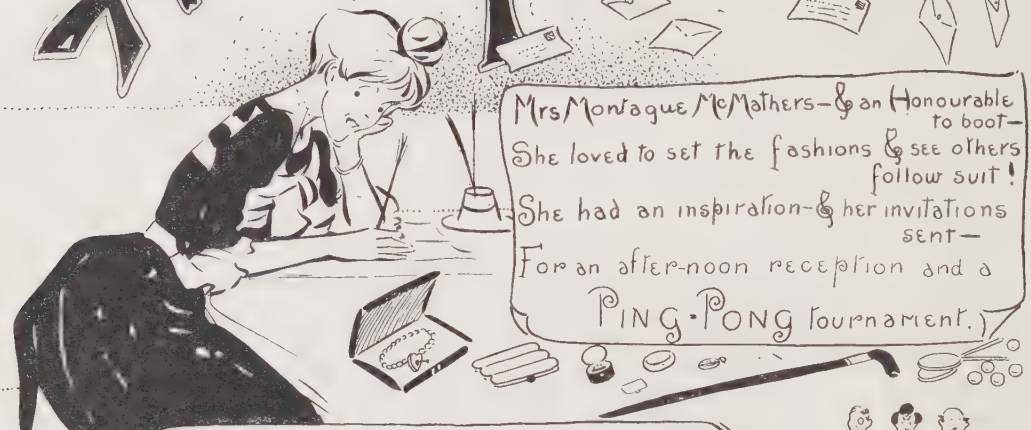
In due time the work was published in three-volume form, and, simple domestic story of English home life as it is, it at once made its mark. Miss Carey had agreed to pay £50 towards the publishing expenses, which sum she never got back, and, in spite of the success of the book, it was not till, on the failure of Messrs. Tinsley's firm, it fell into the hands of Messrs. Richard Bentley, and was published by them in one volume (the first of the long array of the "Standard Series"), that it really began to pay.

"Nellie's Memories" once launched, Miss Carey has not had another moment's difficulty about placing a work. Never since then has a MS. been returned to her. She won name and fame at a single step. There has never been a failure, though many have been the successes of later works: "Not like other Girls," "The old, old Story," "Mollie's Prince," etc., how they have all been read and re-read by girls in all ranks, and in every part of the world!

It has lately been my pleasant task to compile a Birthday Book (published by Messrs. Bousfield and Co.), selected from the many wise and helpful sayings scattered through Miss Carey's books. When I commenced I believed that it would be the later works that would yield me the richest harvest of these, but when all was done, I was surprised to find that the greatest number of sayings are quoted from "Nellie's Memories."

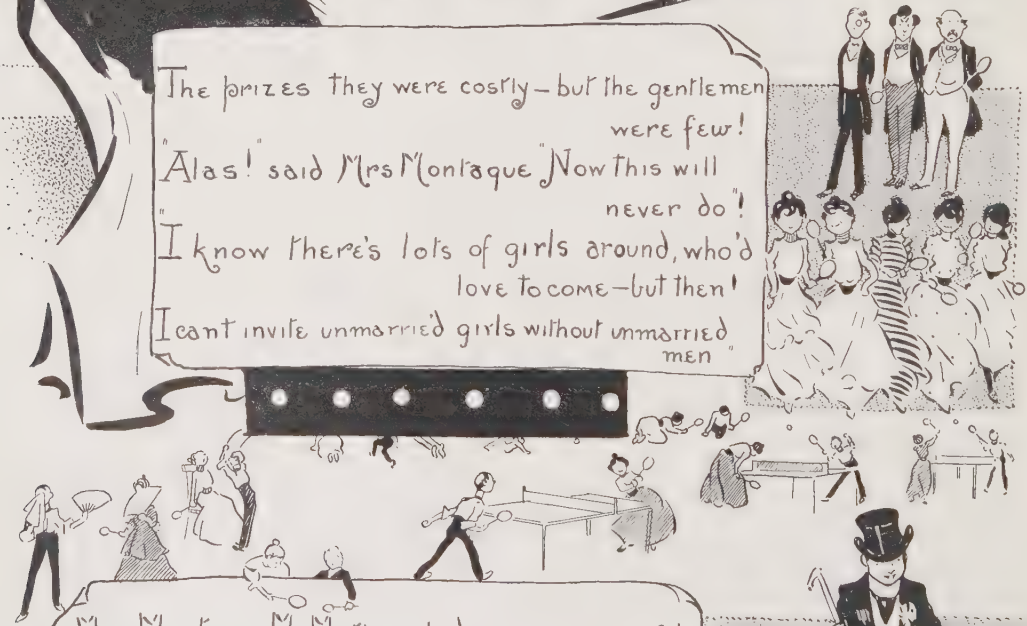
"SANDILANDS," PUTNEY: THE HOME OF MISS CAREY AND MISS BURNSIDE.
Miss Carey can be seen standing in the garden.

THE PING PONG TOURNAMENT

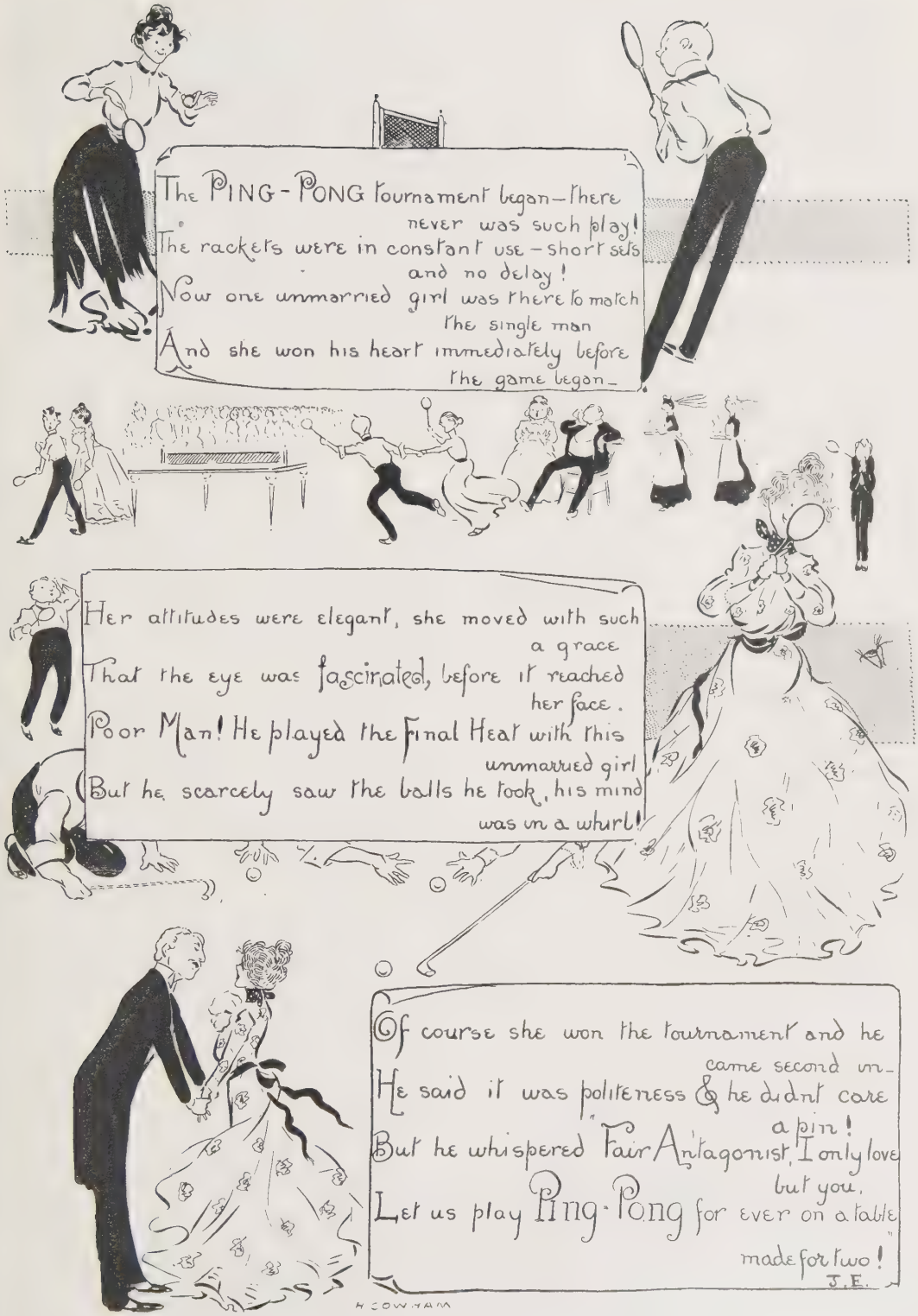


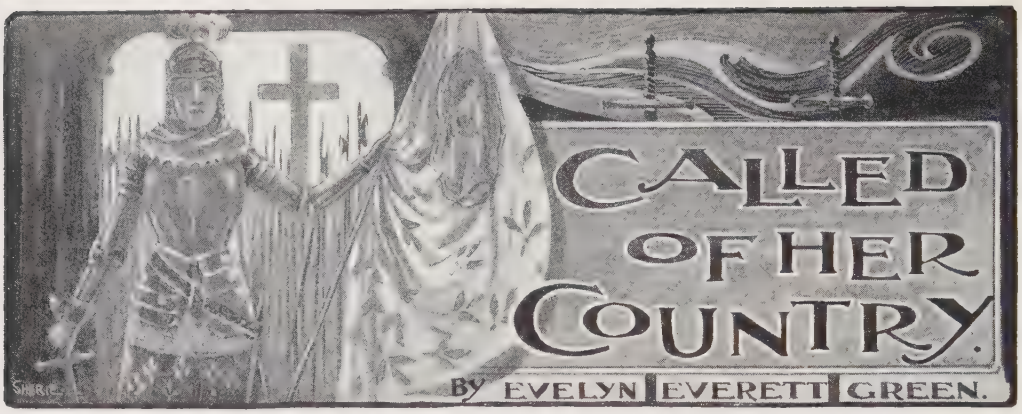
Mrs Montague McMathers—& an Honourable to boot—
She loved to set the fashions & see others follow suit!
She had an inspiration—& her invitations sent—
For an after-noon reception and a
PING-PONG tournament.

The prizes they were costly—but the gentlemen were few!
"Alas!" said Mrs Montague "Now this will never do"!
"I know there's lots of girls around, who'd love to come—but then!
I cant invite unmarried girls without unmarried men"



Mrs Montague McMathers had a most resourceful mind—
She sent pressing invitations to the men that she could find
The married ones accepted who were not too old for fun—
But of eligible single men, she only captured ONE!


The PING-PONG tournament began—there never was such play!
The rackets were in constant use—short sets and no delay!
Now one unmarried girl was there to match the single man
And she won his heart immediately before the game began—
Her attitudes were elegant, she moved with such a grace
That the eye was fascinated, before it reached her face.
Poor Man! He played the Final Heat with this unmarried girl
But he scarcely saw the balls he took, his mind was in a whirl!
Of course she won the tournament and he came second in—
He said it was politeness & he didnt care a pin!
But he whispered Fair Antagonist, I only love but you,
Let us play Ping-Pong for ever on a table made for two!
J.E.
H COWHAM



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE MAID LED US INTO BATTLE.

"It was well indeed that you sent me forth on that mission, my Chieftainess," spoke Dunois, as we sat at the long table in the Treasurer's house, refreshing ourselves after the fatigues of the march to and from the city, and the anxiety of awaiting an attack, which had not come. He bowed towards the Maid in speaking, calling her by a playful title in vogue amongst the officers and Generals who were her friends, "though what prompted you to that act of sagacity is more than I know. I had no misgivings that there would be trouble with the army."

"My voices warned me," answered the Maid gently, "it was not much; yet a little leaven often leavens the whole lump. They needed just the leader's eye and voice to recall them to their duty."

"Truly that is just how the matter stood," spoke Sir Guy in low tones to us twain, Bertram and I, who sat on either side of him at the other end of the board. He had been one to depart and return with Dunois, and we looked eagerly to him for explanation; "there are ever timid spirits in all ranks, and traitors or faint-hearted friends are never far away in such times as these. The army which would have followed the Maid to the death with joy, felt depression and disappointment at being parted from her. Had they been able to ford the river and march straight into the city, there would have been no trouble, no tremors or doubts; but the turning back was a discouragement, and alas! the French have had too much of this of late. There were whisperers at work seeking to undermine faith in the Maid and her mission. As she says, no great hurt was done; it was but the work of a few—and some of these priests, who should better have understood the counsels of God—but a little leaven will work mightily in the lump, as she herself did justly say; and ere we reached Blois, we had heard rumours that the army was talking of disbanding itself and dispersing hither and thither. The truth was not so bad as that; but there was wavering and doubt in the ranks. Our appearance with the message from the Maid worked like a charm. The soldiers when they knew that she had been told of their hesitation, were instantly horribly ashamed. They clamoured to be led back to her, to show the mettle of which they were made. I trow they will not waver again now that she hath them beneath her eye.

"It is marvellous how she doth hold them by the power of her glance, by her gentleness and devotion. And look you, what hath she done to the English? It was rumoured through the city that so soon as the relief army approached the English lines, there would be an attack in force, and our comrades would be driven back at the sword's point, and have to fight every inch of the way. Yet

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The spirited drawings that illustrate Miss E. Everett Green's story, "Called of her Country," are attracting a great deal of attention. They are the work of Mr. E. F. Sherie, a young artist who has given much time and thought to the delineation of character, the action of animals, and the presentation of a scene in all its details. Mr. Sherie does not work without having fully realised the picture he is about to draw; and he does not spare himself any trouble to get it right in all its details. The antiquarian lore displayed in these illustrations is great. He is a young man, and we have a right to look for him in the future, proud to have had some of his best work in "The Girl's Realm."

what has been the truth? The Maid led us to the spot which commanded the road—well in the heart of the English lines. Their fortresses were humming like hives of bees disturbed. The English knew what was being done, and watched it all; yet not a gun was fired, not an archer launched his shaft, not a man moved out to oppose the entrance of the relief force nor even the convoy of provisions for the garrison. They watched it all as men in a dream, not a dog moved his tongue against us."

"She told us it would be so," spoke I, leaning towards Sir Guy, "there will be fighting anon; but it was not to be then. Surely their arms were holden by a power they wot not of. If she herself had not gone forth to guard the way—standing like the flaming cherubim with the sword which turned every way—I misdoubt me but that a heavy action must have been fought, ere the army was suffered to enter the gates."

There was much talk all down the table of these matters; but the Maid took little part in this. Her eyes were heavy, and she looked weary and pale. I doubt not she had spent the night previous in vigil and prayer, as was so often her wont. When we rose from our repast, she retired into a small inner room reserved for her use, and the little Charlotte went with her. A curtain, partly drawn, shut off this room from the outer one in which we knights and some of her pages and gentlemen sat talking; and I was just able to see from where I sat that the Maid had laid herself down upon a couch, the little one nestled beside her, and I felt sure by her stillness and immobility that she was soon soundly asleep, taking the rest she sorely needed after the exertions and excitements of the early hours of the day.

Our conversation languished somewhat, for the warmth of the May afternoon made us all drowsy. We, like the Maid herself, had laid aside our coats of mail, and were enjoying a spell of rest and leisure; and there was silence in both the rooms, when suddenly we—if indeed we slept—were awakened by the voice of the Maid speaking in the voice as of one who dreams.

"I must up and against the English!" she cried, and at the first word I started broad awake and was on my feet at the door of communication, looking towards her. She still lay upon the couch, but her eyes were wide open and fixed; her lips moved.

"I hear, I hear!" she went on, yet still as one who dreams, "I am ready—I will obey. Only tell me what I must do. Is it against the towers I must go, to assail them? Or is it that Fastolffe comes against us with yet another host?"

Little Charlotte here pulled the Maid by the hand crying out,

"What are you saying? To whom do you speak? There is nobody here but you and me?"

The Maid sprang to her feet, wide awake now in an instant. She bent for one moment over the wondering child, and kissed her tenderly, as though to soothe the alarm in the baby eyes.

"Run to your mother, ma mie, for I must off and away on the instant," then wheeling round with her air of martial command, she called to me and said, "To arms at once! I must to the front! French blood is flowing. They are seeking to act without me. O my poor soldiers, they are falling and dying! To horse! to horse! I come to save them!"

Was she dreaming? What did it mean? The town seemed as quiet as the still summer afternoon! Not a sound of tumult broke the silence of the streets. Yet the Maid was having us arm her with lightning speed, and Bertrand had rushed off at the first word for her horse and ours.

"I know not what they are doing," spoke the Maid, "but my voices tell me to fly to their succour! Ah, why could they not have told me before! Have I not ever been ready and longing to lead them against the foe?"

She was ready now. We were all ready, and the echoes of the quiet house awoke beneath our feet as we clattered down the staircase to the courtyard below, where already the horses were standing pawing the ground with impatience, seeming to scent the battle from afar. The Maid swung herself lightly to the saddle with scarce a touch from me.

"My banner! My banner!" she suddenly cried; and looking upwards we saw a pretty sight. The little Charlotte, her mother beside her, was hanging out of the window, the light staff of the Maid's white bannerette clasped in her chubby hands; and she was leaning out of the window, holding it towards the white mailed figure, of whom (in armour) she always spoke, in hushed tone, as *mon ange*. The Maid looked upwards, kissed her gauntletted hand to the little one, seized the staff of her banner, and then, calling upon her followers in clear tones of command, dashed out through the gateway into the street beyond, and without an instant's hesitation turned towards that gate of the city nearest to the English bastille named St. Loup. And though we all spurred after her, so that the sparks flew from under our horses' feet, and the Chevalier d'Aulon brought up the rear bearing the great white standard, which was to lead the armies into battle, we none of us knew where-

fore we had come forth nor whither we were going, and the city being yet still and quiet, the citizens rushed to doors and windows to watch us pass by, and shouted questions to us which we were not able to answer.

Now, the house of the Treasurer is hard by the Renart Gate, and we were making for the Burgundy Gate; so you who know Orleans will understand that we had the whole distance of the city to traverse ere we cleared the walls. And sure enough, as we approached the fortifications upon the eastern side, a change came over the spirit of the scene; signs of excitement and fear and wonder began to show themselves; the walls were alive with men at arms, gazing fixedly out eastward, shouting, gesticulating, wild with a tumult of emotion. Soldiers buckling on their arms, citizens with pale, yet resolute, faces, and swords or axes in their hands, were hurrying forth, and at sight of the Maid on her chestnut charger (for the Crusader was ever her favourite horse, and she had declared that he must carry her into her first battle whenever that should be) they shouted aloud with joy, and vowed themselves her servants and followers, wherever she should lead them.

A young blacksmith, armed with a great club, was hanging upon my stirrup, and bounding along beside my horse with a swiftness and strength which excited my admiration. From him I heard first of the thing which had taken place.

"It was De Gamache and some of the other lesser officers who designed it," he cried. "They declared that the power of the English was already broken; that they would not leave their walls or show fight to-day; that already they had grown fainthearted, and were ready to fly before the French. My Captain, I tell you the truth, these men are jealous of the Angelic Maid whom Heaven has sent us. They say that she will take from them all the honour and glory; that they will fight and risk their lives, but that she alone will have the praise. So they were full of bitterness and anger; and some, methinks, may have thought to shame her by showing her that they could act without her aid, and do the work she has come to do whilst she takes her rest and holds her councils. So, gathering a band of soldiers together, these officers have sallied forth to try and storm and take the fortress of St. Loup, which lies some two thousand English yards from the walls along the river banks. But the soldiers on the walls are shouting out that the English have swarmed forth ike angry bees, and are beating back our soldiers and slaying them by the score."

"They should have known better than to go forth without the knowledge and command of the Maid," I said sternly, and the young man at my side nodded vehemently, his face alight.

"That is what we said—we others—we citizens, who have seen how powerless the soldiers are against the English. Have they not fought again and again, and what has come of it but loss and defeat? And now that the good God has sent a Deliverer, it is like flying in His face to seek and do without her. I said as much again and again, I knew no good would come of it. But when we saw the Maid herself flying to the rescue, then did I vow that I, too, would fight under her banner. For now I know that God will give us the victory!"

We were at the Burgundy Gate by this time, and, dashing through, we saw a terrible sight! The whole open plain between the walls of the town and the fortress of St. Loup was covered with soldiers, strewn with dying and dead. A horrible sort of fight was going on, horrible to us, because the French were in full retreat before our foes, going down like sheep before the butcher's knife, rushing panic stricken hither and thither as men demented, whilst the English soldiers, as though ashamed of their recent inaction and paralysis, were fiercely pursuing, shouting "Kill! kill! kill!" as they went about their work of slaughter, driving back their enemies, and striking at them remorselessly.

Here and there a brave officer, with his band of chosen followers, would be presenting a bold face to the foe, making a stand and seeking to rally the flying ranks. I was certain that I saw De Gamache himself, hewing his way like a very Paladin through the ranks of the English, and dealing death and destruction wherever he went. But the valour of a few had no power to turn the fortunes of the field; and the rout had already begun, when the Maid and her attendants, closely followed by an enthusiastic band of soldiers and citizens, dashed forth from the Burgundy Gate, and mingled with the flying French hastening towards the city for safety.

"Courage, my children, courage!" cried the Maid, waving her white pennon. "Be not dismayed. The Lord has heard your cries. He has sent me to your aid. Take courage! Fear nothing; for the victory shall be ours!"

She did not even pause to note the effect of her words upon them, but sped onwards, fearless of danger, right into the very heart of the battle. We followed and closed up round her; but that shining white figure could not be hidden. The English saw it bearing down upon them, and instantly there was wavering in their ranks. Before our

swords had had time to strike at them, something touched them as with an icy hand.

"The Maid! the Maid! The White Witch!" they cried, and they paused in their pursuit to gaze upon that dazzling figure, and methinks their hearts melted like wax within them.

From behind now arose a mighty tumult, and shouts and cries as of triumph thundered from the city walls. Dunois and La Hire, more tardily advised of what was happening, but prompt and decisive in action, were galloping out of the Gate at the head of the picked soldiers under their command. Rank behind rank we could see them flashing through the shadow into the sunshine, and dashing forward in compact order, their gaze fixed full upon the Maid in the centre of the plain, who stood with uplifted sword and fluttering pennon, a veritable angel of the battle.

But we saw other sights too; for Lord Talbot was not idle on his side, but sent forth from other of the bastilles bodies of men to the aid of the soldiers of St. Loup. The whole plain was filled with surging masses of soldiers, rushing one upon the other in the fury of the fray.

How would the Maid bear it? She whose tender heart ached at the thought of human suffering, and whose soul was filled with yearning sorrow for men struck down in their sins. I pressed up towards her and saw her pitiful eyes fixed upon a convoy of wounded men, whom we had sent to rescue from their peril, lying as they did in the very heart of the plain. The eyes which had been flashing fire a moment before, were suffused with tears, as the melancholy procession passed her by. She turned to her page and said, "Ride quickly into the city, and bid the priests come forth to hear the confessions and give absolution to the dying. Lose not a moment! Tell them that souls are every moment being hurried to their last account. Bid them make haste and come, and let them give equal care to friend and foe; for in death all men are equal in the sight of God, and I would not that any English soldier or prisoner should fall without the consolations of religion."

Then, having thus done all that she could for the wounded and the dying, the Maid was once again the resolute soldier. Her keen eyes swept the plain; she saw with lightning speed where the need was the greatest, where the peril to the French cause was direst, and sweeping into the midst of the press, her sword and her banner flashing in the sunshine, she ever brought succour and victory in her wake. No foe could stand before her. Not that she struck blows with her own hand. There seemed no need for that, and when at the close of the day I relieved her of her arms, there was no spot of blood upon her shining blade, though her coat of silver mail had received stains from the fray. She was like the Angel of Victory, flashing through the ranks of the combatants. Wherever she appeared, the flying French turned back to face the foe, and the pursuing English

"'TO ARMS AT ONCE,' CRIED THE MAID, 'MY POOR SOLDIERS ARE FALLING AND DYING. I COME TO SAVE THEM.'"—(*p.* 321.)

wavered, paused, and finally broke rank and fled backwards to the shelter of their walls and forts. Our men fought gallantly—let me not deny them their due—soldiers and citizens alike, who had come forth with and after the Maid, all were inspired by confidence and courage. But it was her presence in the ranks which gave assurance of victory. Wherever French soldiers wavered it was when she was far away and her back towards them. Yet so soon as she turned in their direction—and some power seem to whisper to her whenever her soldiers were dismayed—and galloped to their assistance, all was well again; and ere an hour had passed the English were driven back within their towers, and the victory was ours.

Dunois and La Hire rode up to the Maid and saluted. From the city in our rear we could already hear the pealing of the joy bells, the triumphant acclamation of the joyful populace.

"Let us lead you back thither to receive the plaudits you have so well deserved," spoke Dunois, who was man enough to give all the credit of the victory to the Maid, "Right valiantly have you accomplished your task. Now let us take you to receive the gratitude of the town."

"Accomplished!" repeated the Maid with a glance of surprise, "Why, my friends, the task is scarcely yet begun!"

They gazed at her in amazement; but she quietly pointed towards the frowning walls and battlements of St. Loup.

"We must take yonder tower," she said quietly, "that is what our brave, but rash young officers set themselves to do. They shall not be disappointed. It shall be ours ere night fall upon us. Call to me the bold De Gamache; I would have speech with him and his comrades."

The greater Generals looked at her and at one another, speaking no word. The walls and battlements of St. Loup were strong and well defended. The tower could spout fire and smoke like a living monster. Already the troops had marched far and fought hotly. Surely if assault were to be made it should wait for another day. Thus they communed together a stone's throw from the Maid; but she only looked upon them with her deep inward smile, and softly I heard her speak the words; "No, it must be done to-day."

De Gamache rode up, and some half dozen other officers with him. His face was stained with blood and blackened by smoke. He had a scarf bound about his left arm; but his bearing was bold and resolute, and though his cheek flushed at the clear, direct gaze of the Maid's eyes, he neither faltered nor trembled as he stood before her.

"You did desire a good thing, my Captain," she said, "And had you told me of your brave wish, I would have put myself at your head and led you to victory forthwith. Yet this victory has not been forfeited, only delayed by your eager rashness. Say, if I lead you myself, this very hour against yon frowning tower, will you follow me like brave soldiers of the Cross, and not turn back till my Lord has given us the victory? For He will deliver yon place into our hands, albeit not without bloodshed, not without stress or strife. Many must be slain ere we can call it ours, but, will you follow and take it?"

The shout which arose from a thousand throats rang to the welkin, and methinks must have smote with dread import upon the English ears. The Maid's voice seemed to float through the air, and penetrate to the extreme limits of the crowd, or else it was taken up and repeated by a score of eager tongues, and so ran through the mighty muster with thrilling import. The eyes were dazzled by the flashing blades as men swung them above their heads.

"Lead us, O Maid, lead us! We follow to death or victory! We fear nothing so that you are our leader and our guide!"

There was no withstanding a spirit like that! La Hire's voice was one of the foremost in the cry; his great blade the first to leap from its scabbard. Sage counsels of war, prompted by experience had to give way before a power different from anything which the veterans had known before. With a dash, the *élan* of which was a marvellous sight to see, the soldiers poured themselves like a living stream against the walls of St. Loup. The English behind the fortifications rained upon them missiles of every description. The air was darkened by clouds of arrows. The cannon from the walls belched forth smoke and flame, and great stone and iron balls came hurtling down into our midst, dealing death and destruction. The English soldiers with their characteristic daring sallied forth sword in hand to beat us back; and yet we pressed on and ever on; driven backwards here and there by stress of fighting; but never giving great way, and always rallied by the sight of that gleaming white armour, and by the clear, sweet voice ringing out through all the tumult of arms.

"Courage, my children, courage. The fight is fierce; but my Lord gives you the victory. A little more courage, a little more patience, and the day is ours!"

She stood unscathed amid the hail of stones and arrows. Her clear glance never quailed; her sweet voice never faltered; she had thought for

"THE ROUT HAD ALREADY BEGUN, WHEN THE MAID AND HER ATTENDANTS, CLOSELY FOLLOWED BY AN ENTHUSIASTIC BAND OF SOLDIERS AND CITIZENS, DASHED FORTH."—(*p.* 322.)

everyone but herself. Again and again with her own hands she snatched some follower from a danger unseen by him, but which a moment later would have been his death. She herself stood unmoved in the awful tumult. She even smiled when Dunois and La Hire would have drawn her from the hottest of the fighting.

"No, no, my friends, my place is here. Have

no fear. I shall not suffer. I have guardians watching over me that you wot not of."

And so she stood unmoved at the foot of the tower, till the English, overcome with amaze, gave up the defence, and fled from a place they believed must surely be bewitched. And as the last of the sunlight faded from the sky, the fortress of St. Loup was ours. The Maid had fought her first battle, and had triumphed.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW THE MAID BORE TRIUMPH AND TROUBLE.

THE people of Orleans, and we her knights and followers, were well-nigh wild with joy. I do not think I had ever doubted how she would bear herself in battle; and yet my heart had sometimes trembled at the thought of it. For, after all, speaking humanly, she was but a girl, a gentle maid, loving and tender-hearted, to whom the sight of suffering was always a sorrow and a pain. And to picture a young girl, who had perhaps never seen blows struck in anger in her life—save perchance in some village brawl—suddenly set in the midst of a battle; arms clashing, blood flowing, all the hideous din of warfare around her, exposed to all its fearful risks and perils—was it strange we should ask ourselves how she would bear it? Was it wonderful that her bearing and calmness and steadfast courage under the trial should convince us, as never perhaps we had been convinced before, of the nearness of those supernatural beings who guarded her so closely, who warned her of danger, who inspired her with courage, and yet never robbed her for one moment of the grace and beauty and crown of her pure womanhood.

And so, whilst we were well-nigh mad with joy and triumph, whilst joy-bells pealed from the city, and the soldiers and citizens were ready to do her homage as a veritable saint from heaven, she was just her own quiet, thoughtful, retiring self. She put aside the plaudits of the Generals; she hushed the excited shouting of the soldiers. She exercised her authority to check and stop the carnage, to insist that quarter should be given to all who asked it, to see that the wounded upon both sides were carried into the city to receive attention and care, and in particular that the prisoners—amongst whom were several priests—should receive humane treatment, and escape any sort of insult or reprisal. These matters occupied her time and thought to the exclusion of any personal pride or triumph. It was with difficulty that the Generals could persuade her to ride at their head into the city, to receive the applause and joyful gratitude of the people; and as soon as she could without discourtesy extricate herself from the crowd pressing round to kiss her hands or her feet, or even the horse upon which she rode, she slipped away to give orders that certain badly wounded English prisoners were to be carried to the Treasurer's house, and laid in the spacious guest chamber, which, having been prepared for her own reception, had been permitted to no one else. Here she begged of Madame Boucher permission to lodge them, that she might tend their hurts herself, and assure herself that all was well with them.

No one could deny the Maid those things she asked, knowing well that others in her place would have issued commands without stooping to petition But with the Maid it was never so. Her gentle courtesy never deserted her. No association with men, no military dignity of command, which she could so well assume, ever tarnished the lustre of her sweet humility. A gentle maiden, full of tenderness and compassion, she showed herself now. Instead of resting after the sore strife of the battle, which had exhausted even strong men, nothing would serve her but that she must herself dress the wounds of these English prisoners; and so deft was her touch, and so soft and tender her methods with them, that not a groan passed the lips of any of them; they only watched her with wondering eyes of gratitude; and when she had left the room they looked at each other and asked:

"Who is it? Is it boy, or angel, or what? The voice is as the voice of a woman, and the touch is as soft; but the dress is the dress of a man. Who can it be?"

I understood them, for I knew something of the English tongue, and I saw that they were in great amazement; for all who had seen the Maid bore her image stamped upon their hearts; and yet it was impossible for these prisoners of war to believe that the triumphant, angelic Commander of the Forces could stoop to tend the hurts of wounded prisoners with her own hands.

"Gentlemen," I said, "that is the Angelic Maid herself—she who has been sent of Heaven for the deliverance of France. I trow that you soldiers and knights of England have called her witch, and threatened to burn her if you can lay hands upon her. Perchance now that you have seen her thus face to face, your thoughts towards her will somewhat change."

They gazed at me and at one another in amaze. They broke into questions, eager and full of curiosity. When I had answered them they were ready to tell me what was spoken of her in the English ranks; all averred that some strange

power seemed to fall upon them with the advent of the Maid into the city—a power that withheld them from sallying forth to hinder her coming, or that of the relieving army.

"We had meant to fight her to the death," spoke one English knight, "I was in counsel with the Generals when it was so proposed; and yet more resolved were we to keep out the army from Blois, which we heard must needs pass straight through our lines—an easy prey, we said, to our gunners, archers and swordsmen. All was in readiness for the attack—and yet no word was ever given. No trumpet sounded, though the men were drawn up ready. We all stood to arms; but the sight of that dazzling white figure seemed to close the lips of our commanders, to numb the limbs of our soldiers. I can say no more. When the chance was gone—the hour passed, we gazed into each other's faces as men awaking from a dream. We cursed ourselves. We cursed the witch who had bound us by her spells. We vowed to redeem and revenge ourselves another day. And when we saw the French issuing forward to the attack scarce two hours after the entry of the relieving army, and there was no white figure with them, then indeed did we tell ourselves that our time was come; and we thought to win a speedy victory over the men who so often had fled before us. Yet you know how the day did end. The Maid came—victory rode beside her! Nought we could do availed when she appeared. I had thought to be left to die upon the battle-field; but behold I am here; and she has dressed my wounds with her own hands! It is wonderful! Past belief! Tell me who and what is she? A creature of earth or of heaven?"

I had already told him all I knew; but they were never tired of hearing the story of the Maid; and as I, at her request, watched beside them during the night, ministering to their wants, and doing what I was able to relieve their pain, I found that nothing so helped them to forget the smart of their wounds as the narration of all the wonderful words and deeds of this Heavenly Deliverer of France.

They were frank enough on their side also, and told me much of the disposition of their forces, and how that they were expecting a strong army to join them quickly, headed by Sir John Fastolffe, a notable knight, whose name we well knew, and had trembled before ere this. They admitted that their ranks were somewhat thinned by disease and death, and that they had scarce sufficient force both to maintain all the bastilles erected on the north side of the river and also to hold the great forts of Les Tourelles and Les Augustins on the south; but that when the reinforcements should arrive all would be well, and but for the marvellous power of the Maid, they would have felt no doubt whatever as to the speedy reduction of the city either by assault or blockade.

With the first golden shafts of sunlight came the Maid once more, little Charlotte beside her both bearing in their hands such cooling drinks and light sustenance as the condition of the wounded men required. The Maid wore the white, silver embroidered tunic and silken hose which Queen Yolande had provided for her indoor dress; she carried no arms, and her clustering curls framed her lovely face like a nimbus. All eyes were fixed upon her as upon a vision, and as she bent over each wounded man in turn, asking him of his welfare and holding a cup to his lips, I could see the amazement deepening in their eyes; and I am sure that they were well nigh ready to worship the ground upon which she trod, so deep was the impression made upon them by her beauty and her gentle treatment.

When she left the room I followed her at her sign, and asked:

"Then you go not forth to battle to-day General?"

"Nay," she replied, "for to-day the Church keeps the blessed Feast of the Ascension; which should be to all a day of peace and thanksgiving and holy joy. I am going forthwith to hear Mass and receive the Holy Sacrament; and I would have my faithful knights about me. Let us forget warfare and strife for this day."

Her own face was transfigured as she spoke. The light shone upon it all the time that she knelt before the high altar in the Cathedral, rapt in a mystery of thanksgiving and heavenly joy. O how real it all was to her—those things which were to us articles of faith, grounds of hope, yet matters which seemed too far above us to arouse that personal rapture which was shining from the eyes and irradiating the whole face of the Maid.

It was a beautiful beginning to the day; and all the early hours were spent by the Maid in meditation and prayer within the walls of the Cathedral, where the people flocked as perhaps they had never done before, to give thanks for the mercies received with the advent of the Maid, and to gaze upon her, as she knelt in a trance of rapture and devotion in her appointed place not far from the altar. We, her knights, went to and fro, some of us always near to her, that the crowd might not too curiously press upon her when she went forth, or disturb her devotions by too close an approach. I noted that none of the Generals appeared or took part in the acts of devotion that day. And as

"I FEAR US, O MAHI, LEAD US! WE FEAR NOTHING SO THAT YOU ARE OUR LEADER AND OUR GUIDE."—(*p.* 324.)

I issued forth into the sunny street at the close of the High Mass, Bertrand met me with a look of trouble and anger on his face.

"They are all sitting in council of war together," he said, "and they have not even told her of it, nor suffered her to join them! How can they treat her so—even Dunois and La Hire—when they have seen again and yet again how futile are all plans made by their skill without the sanction of her voice? It makes my gorge rise! Do they think her a mere beautiful image, to ride before them and carry a white banner to affright the foe? It is a shame, a shame that they should treat her so, after all that they have seen and heard!"

I was as wrath as Bertrand, and as full of surprise. Even now, looking back after all these years, the blindness of these men of war astonishes and exasperates me. They had seen with their own eyes what the Maid could accomplish; again and again she had proved herself the abler in counsel as in fight; and yet they now deliberately desired to set her aside from their councils, and only inform her of their decisions when made, and permit her to take a share in the fighting they had planned.

Bertrand was furiously angry. He led me up into a lofty turret which commanded a bird's-eye view of the whole city and its environs, and he pointed out that which the Maid had declared she would straightway do, so soon as the Feast of the Ascension was over, and how the Generals were about to follow a quite different course.

Orleans, as all men know, lies upon the right—the north bank of the Loire, and the country to the north was then altogether in the power of the English; wherefore they had built their great bastilles around the city upon that side without molestation, and were able to receive supplies from their countrymen without let or hindrance.

But these bastilles were not the chiefest danger to the city, or rather I should say, it was not these which were the chiefest cause of peril, since no help could reach the garrison from that side. They looked to the country to the south to help them, and it was to stop supplies from reaching them by water or from the south that the English had long since crossed the river and had established themselves in certain forts along the south bank. Of these St. Jean le Blanc was one; but by far the most important and dangerous to the city were the two great towers commanding the bridge, whose names I have given before. Let me explain how these great fortifications stood.

Les Augustins had once been a convent, and it stood on the south bank, very near to the end of the bridge, guarding it securely from attack, and commanding the waterway and the approach to the city. Les Tourelles was an even stronger tower, constructed upon the very bridge itself, and menacing the town in formidable fashion. Dunois had broken down the main portion of the bridge on the north side to prevent the advance into the city of the English from their tower; so it stood grimly isolated from either bank; for the permanent bridge at the south end had been destroyed to be replaced by a drawbridge which could rise or fall at will. And it was these towers of Les Augustins and Les Tourelles which had reduced the city to such straits by hindering the entrance of food supplies. Moreover, from Les Tourelles great stone cannon balls had been hurled into the city in vast numbers, battering down walls and doing untold hurt to buildings and their inhabitants.

Now it was evident to all that these fortresses must be taken if the city were to be relieved and the siege raised. But the Maid, with her far-seeing eyes, had decreed that first the bastilles upon the north bank should be attacked and destroyed; and it was easy to follow her reasoning; "for," she said, "when the English are fiercely attacked there, they will, without doubt, yield up these lesser fortresses without great struggle, concentrating themselves in force upon the left bank, where they think to do us most hurt. We shall then destroy their bastilles, so that they will have no place of shelter to fly back to; and then we shall fall upon them hip and thigh on the south side, and drive them before us as chaff before the wind. They must needs then disperse themselves altogether, having no more cover to hide themselves in; so will the enemies of the Lord be dispersed, and the siege of Orleans be raised."

This was the plan she had confided to her own immediate attendants and staff the previous evening, and which Bertrand repeated to me, gazing over the ramparts, and pointing out each fortress and bastion as it was named. But now the Generals in Council, without reference to the Maid, had decreed something altogether different. What they desired to do was not to make any real or vigorous attack upon any of the English forts; but to feign an assault upon the towers on the south bank, and whilst the attention of the foe was thus engaged, get great quantities of stores—all lying in readiness at hand—into the city, enough to last for a long while, and then quietly sit down behind the strong walls, and tire out the English, forcing them thus to retreat of their own accord!

Think of it! After all that had been promised, all that had been performed! To be content to shut ourselves in a well-provisioned town, and

just weary out the patience of the foe! And, moreover, of a foe who expected daily reinforcements from the north, and who would be quite capable of exercising as much patience, and perhaps more daring than ourselves.

Even now my blood boils at the thought, and I find it hard to conceive how such men as Dunois and La Hire let themselves be led from their allegiance and confidence in the Maid to listen to such counsel as this from her detractors, and those many lesser commanders who were sorely jealous of her success and influence. But so it was, not once nor twice, but again and again; though in action they were staunch to her, would follow her everywhere, rally round her standard, fly to her defence when danger threatened, and show themselves gallant soldiers and generous-hearted men, never denying her all her share of praise and honour. But when sitting in the council room, surrounded by officers and men of experience in war disposed to scorn the counsels of an unlettered girl, and scoff at her pretensions to military rule, they were invariably led away and overborne, agreeing to act without, or even contrary to her advice, notwithstanding their belief in her mission, and their trust in her power as a leader.

The shades of evening had fallen in the Treasurer's house before word was brought to the Maid of the decision of the Generals in Council. We were sitting around her after supper; and she had fallen into a very thoughtful mood. The Chevalier d'Aulon had been called away, and now returned with a troubled face. He stood just within the doorway, as though half afraid to advance. The Maid lifted her eyes to his and smiled.

"Do not fear to tell me your news, my kind friend. I know that your faithful heart is sore at the dishonour done to me; but let us not judge harshly. It is hard for men full of courage and fleshly power to understand how the Lord works with such humble instruments. Perchance, in their place, we should not be greatly different. So they have refused my plan, and made one of their own. We are to attack the foe upon the south? Is that it? And even so not with all our heart and strength?"

D'Aulon recoiled a step in amaze.

"Madame, that is indeed so—a feint upon the south bank has been decreed, whilst provisions are thrown into the city——"

"Yes, yes, I know. Well, so be it. We will attack on the south bank. It must have come sooner or later, and if we fight with a will, the Lord will be with us and uphold our cause. But, my friends, understand this, and let the men likewise understand it. There shall be no mockery of fighting. It shall be true and desperate warfare. Let the Generals decree what they will, the Maid will lead her soldiers to victory. To-morrow Les Augustins shall be ours; upon the next day Les Tourelles shall fall;—" she paused suddenly and turned towards Bertrand.

"What day will that be—the day after to-morrow?"

"The seventh day of May," he answered at once.

"Ah!" she said, "then it will be on that day—the day which shall see Orleans relieved - the power of the English broken."

She spoke dreamily, and only Madame Bourcher, who sat in the shadows with her child upon her lap, ventured to ask of her,

"What will be on that day, gentle Jeanne?"

"That I shall be wounded," she answered quietly. "Did I not tell you long since," turning to Bertrand and me, "that I should not come unscathed through the assault; but that on a certain day I should receive a wound?"

I pulled out my tablets, upon which I often recorded the sayings of the Maid, and sure enough there it was written down as she said. We felt a great burning revolt at the thought of any hurt befalling her, and somebody spoke vehemently, saying that the holy Saints would surely protect her from harm. But she lifted her hand with her gentle authority of gesture, and spoke,

"Nay, my kind friends, but thus it must needs be; nor would I have it otherwise. Listen, and I will tell you all. I often had my days and hours of fear because this great work was put upon one so weak and ignorant as I, and it was long before I clearly understood that I was but the instrument in a mighty Hand, and that power for all would be given me. Then my fear left, and great joy came; perhaps even some pride and haughtiness of spirit in that I had been chosen for such a task. And then it was that my voices asked of me, 'Jeanne, hast thou no fear?' And I answered without pause, 'I fear nothing now.' Then St. Catherine herself suddenly appeared to me in a great white light and said, 'Child, thou art highly favoured of heaven; but the flesh is easily puffed up. And for this cause, and because it may be well that thou thyself and all men shall know that thou art but human flesh and blood, thou shalt not escape unscathed in warfare; but thou too shalt feel the sting of fiery dart, and know the scald of flowing blood.' I bowed my head and made answer I would bear whatever my Lord thought fit to lay upon me; and I asked if I might know when this thing would happen. It was not told me then; but later it was revealed to me; and I know that upon the seventh day of May I shall be wounded—" and she

touched her right shoulder as she spoke just below the neck, "But what matter will that be, when the siege of Orleans shall be raised?"

Her face was aglow; nothing could touch her joy, not the insults of the proud Generals, nor the knowledge of coming pain for herself. Her thought was all of the mission entrusted to her; and so, though thwarted and set aside, she showed no petty anger, dreamed not of any paltry vengeance such as others might have dealt the soldiers, by refusing to march with them on the morrow. Oh, no; hurt she might be—indeed we knew she was—her pain being for the dishonour done her Lord in this disrespect of His messenger; but no thought of reprisal entered her head. She rose from her seat, and lifted the little Charlotte in her strong young arms.

"Gentlemen, let us early to rest," she said holding her head proudly, "for to-morrow a great work shall be done, and we must all have our share in it."

CHAPTER XII.

HOW THE MAID RAISED THE SIEGE.

To tell the tale of how Les Augustins was taken is but to tell again the tale of St. Loup.

I know not precisely what instructions the lesser officers received, nor what they told their men. But whether from preconcerted arrangement that the attack was only to be a feint, or whether from the dash and energy of the English, it appeared at first as though the tide of war was rolling back in its old track, and that the prowess of the English was destined to win the day. For one thing the assault was commenced before the Maid had crossed the river and could put herself at the head of the men. A large body of troops had been transported to the south side in boats during the night, under cover of darkness; and this was all very well; but they should have waited when daylight came for the Maid to march at their head, instead of which they sought to rush the fortress before ever she had appeared at all; and when we arrived at the river's bank, it was to see a furious battle raging round the base of Les Augustins, and ere we were half across the river, we saw only too plainly that the French were being badly beaten, were fleeing in all directions from the pursuing foe, and were making for the river bank once more as fast as their legs could carry them.

The Maid watched it all, with that strange, inscrutable look upon her face, and that battle-light in her eyes which we were all learning to know. She was sitting upon her horse; for though a number of animals had been taken across in the night, no horse of hers had been so conducted, and we had led the creature with its rider into the grea flat-bottomed boat; so that she was on a higher level than the rest of us, and could better see what was passing there, though it was plain to all that our soldiers were getting badly beaten.

"O foolish children, silly sheep!" murmured the Maid as she watched, "and yet you are not to blame, but those who lead you. When will they understand? When will they believe?"

We reached the shore, and the Maid, without waiting for any of us to mount or form a body-guard round her, leaped her horse to the bank, and charged up it, her pennon flying, her eyes alight with the greatness of her purpose. But even as she climbed the slippery bank, a great rush of flying soldiers met her, and by their sheer weight forced back horse and rider almost to the river's brink before they were aware who or what it was. Then her silver trumpet voice rang out. She called upon them to reform, to follow her. She cried that her Lord would give them the victory, and almost before we who had accompanied her had formed into rank for the charge, the flying, panic-stricken men from the front, ashamed and filled with fresh ardour, had turned themselves about, closed up their scattered ranks, and were ready to follow her whithersoever she might lead them.

Yet it was to no speedy victory she urged them. No angel with a flaming sword came forth to fight and overcome as by a miracle. It was enough for that white-clad figure to stand revealed in the thickest of the carnage to animate the men to heroic effort. As I say, it was the story of St. Loup over again; but if anything the fighting was more severe. What the Generals had meant for a mere feint, the Maid turned into a desperate battle. The English were reinforced many times; it seemed as though we had a hopeless task before us. But confidence and assurance of victory were in our hearts as we saw our Deliverer stand in the thick of the fight and heard her clarion voice ringing over the field. Ere the shades of night fe not only was Les Augustins ours, but its stores of food and ammunition had been safely transported into the city, and the place so destroyed and dismantled that never again could it be a source of peril to the town.

And now the Maid's eyes were fixed full upon the frowning bulk of Les Tourelles, rising grim and black against the darkling sky, with its little "tower of the Boulevard," on this side the drawbridge. Thither had the whole English force retired – all who were not lying dead or desperately wounded on the plain or round the gutted tower of Les Augustins – we saw their threatening faces

looking down fiercely upon us, and heard the angry voices from the walls, heaping abuse and curses upon the "White Witch," who had wrought them this evil.

"Would that we could attack at once!" spoke the Maid. "Would that the sun would stay his course! Truly I do believe that we should carry all before us!"

The leaders came up to praise and glorify her prowess. They heard her words, but answered how that the men must needs have a night's rest ere they tried this second great feat of arms. But, they added, there should be no going back into the city, no delay on the morrow in crossing the river. It was a warm summer-like night. Provisions were abundant, shelter could be obtained beneath the walls of the captured citadel. They, with the bulk of the army, would remain on the south bank for the night, and the Maid should return to the city with the convoys of wounded, to spend a quiet night there, and return with the dawn of the morrow to renew the attack and take Les Tourelles.

Thus they spoke, and spoke suavely and courteously. But I did note a strange look in the eyes of the Maid; and I wondered why it was that Dunois, the speaker, grew red and stumbled in his speech, whilst that La Hire, who had done a giant's work in the fighting that day, ground his teeth and looked both ashamed and disturbed.

The Maid stood a brief while as though in doubt. But then she made quiet reply,

"Then, gentlemen, it shall be as you will. I will return to the city for the night. But with the dawn of day I will be here, and Les Tourelles shall be ours. The siege of Orleans shall be raised!"

They bowed low to her; every one of them made obeisance. Yet was there something ironical in the very humility of some? I could not tell; yet my heart burned within me as I followed our mistress, and never had I known her so silent as she was upon our journey back, or as we sat at supper, the rest of us telling of the day's doings, but the Maid speechless, save when she bent her head to answer some eager question of little Charlotte's, or to smile at her childish prattle.

Suddenly the door was flung open, and Sir Guy strode in with a face like a thunder-cloud. Behind him came a messenger sent by the Generals to the Maid, and this was the news he brought.

There had been a council held after dark, and it was then unanimously agreed that all now had been done that was necessary. The city was provisioned, the power of the English had been greatly weakened and broken. They would now be content with the triumphs already won, and would quietly await further reinforcements before taking any fresh step.

The man who brought this message faltered as he delivered it. The Maid sat very still and quiet, her head lifted in a dignified but most expressive disdain.

"Monsieur," she replied when the man ceased speaking, "go back to those who sent you. Tell them that they have had their council and I have had mine. I leave the city at dawn as I have said. I return not to it till the siege has been raised."

The man bowed and retired confusedly. The Maid lifted the little child in her arms, as was her wont, to carry her to bed. She turned to her chaplain as she did so.

"Come to me at dawn, my father, to hear my confession: and I pray you accompany me upon the morrow; for my blood will be shed. But do not weep or fear for me, my friends, nor spread any banquet for me ere I start forth upon the morrow; but keep all for my return in the evening, when I will come to you by the bridge."

She was gone as she spoke, and we gazed at her and each other in amaze; for how could she come back by a bridge which had been destroyed, and how did she brook such slights as were heaped upon her without showing anger and hurt pride?

"And there is worse yet to come!" cried Sir Guy, in a fury of rage, "for I lingered behind to hear and see. If you will believe it, there are numbers and numbers of the lesser officers who would desire that the Maid should now be told that her work is done, and that she can retire to her home in Domrémy; that the King will come himself with another reinforcing army to raise the siege, so that they may get rid of her, and take the glory to themselves whenever the place shall be truly relieved. Could you believe such folly, such treachery?"

We could not; we could scarce believe our ears, and right glad was I to hear how that La Hire had had no part in this shameful council; and I hope that Dunois had not either, though I fear me he was less staunch. La Hire had returned to the city to seek to infuse into the citizens some of the spirit of the Maid. He was always for bold attack, and would be ready on the morrow, we did not doubt, for whatever might betide.

It was little after dawn when we rode forth, the Maid in her white armour at our head, carrying her small pennon, whilst D'Aulon bore the great white standard close behind. Her face was pale and rapt. None of us spoke to her, and

Pasquerel, her good chaplain, rode behind telling his beads as he went.

We reached the Burgundy Gate; and behold it was fast shut. At the portal stood De Gaucourt, a notable warrior, with a grim look about his mouth. The Maid saluted him courteously, and quietly bid him open the gate. But he budged not an inch.

"Madam," he said, "I have my commands from the Generals of the army. The gate is to remain shut. No one is to be suffered to pass forth to-day."

We understood in a moment. This was a ruse to trap the Maid within the city walls. Our hands were upon the hilts of our swords. At a word from her, they would have flashed forth and De Gaucourt would have been a dead man had he sought to hinder us in the opening of the gate. But the Maid read our purpose in our eyes and in our gestures: and she stayed us by her lifted hand.

"Not so, my friends," she answered gravely, "but the Chevalier de Gaucourt will himself order the opening of the gate. I have to ride through it and at once. My Lord bids it!"

"BERTRAND LED ME UP INTO A LOFTY TURRET, WHICH COMMANDED A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE WHOLE CITY AND ITS ENVIRONS."—(*p.* 329.)

Her eyes flashed full and suddenly upon him. We saw him quiver from head to foot. With his own hands he unlocked the gate and it seemed to swing of its own accord wide open before us. The Maid bent her head in gracious acknowledgment, swept through and was off to the river like a flash of white lightning.

The river lay golden in the glory of the morning. The boats which had transported us across last night bore us bravely over now. I know not how the Generals felt when they saw the Maid, a dazzling vision of brightness, her great white standard close behind, her phalanx of knights and gentlemen in attendance, gallop up to the scene of action, from which they thought they had successfully banished her. I only know that from the throats of the soldiers there arose a deafening shout of welcome. They at least believed in her. They looked to her as to none else. They would follow her unwaveringly, when no other commander could make them budge. A yell that rent the very firmament went up at sight of her, and every man seized his arms and sprang to his post, as though inspired by the very genius of victory.

"Courage, my children, forward! The day shall be ours!" she cried, as she took her place at the head of the formidable charge against the walls which frowned and bristled with the pikes and arrows of the English. Her voice, like a silver clarion rang clear through the din of the furious battle which followed:—

"*Bon cœur, bonne ésperance, mes enfants*, the hour of victory is at hand! *De la part de Dieu! De la part de Dieu!*"

That was her favourite battle cry! It was God who should give the victory. But it was no easy victory we were to win that day. The English fought with the energy of despair. They knew as well as we that when Les Tourelles fell the siege would be raised. True they had their bastilles upon the north side of the river to fall back upon, since the Maid's counsel of destruction had not been followed. But once dislodged from the south bank, and Orleans would lie open to the support of her friends in the south, and the position of the English army would be one of peril. For now the French were no more cowed

by craven fear of the power of their enemies. They had found them capable of defeat and overthrow; the spell was broken. And it was the Maid who had done it!

Oh, how we fought around her that day! She was on foot now, for the banks of the moat were slippery, and the press around the walls was too great to admit easily of the tactics of horsemen. I never saw her strike at any foe. It was her pennon rather than her sword in which she trusted. Here was the rallying point for the bravest and most desperate of the assailants, ever in the thickest of the strife, ever pointing the way to victory. It was the tower of the Boulevard against which we were directing our attack. If that fell, Les Tourelles itself must needs follow, isolated as it would then be in the midst of the river. We did not know it then, but we were to learn later, that La Hire in the city with a great band of citizens and soldiers to help him, was already hard at work constructing a bridge which should carry him and his men across to Les Tourelles, to take the English in the rear, whilst their attention was concentrated upon our work on the other side. No wonder that the clash and din was something deafening, that the boom of the great cannon ceased not; smoke and fire seemed to envelop the walls of the towers; the air was darkened by clouds of arrows; great stones came crashing into our midst. Men fell on every side; we had much ado to press on without treading underfoot the dead and dying; but the white pennon fluttered before us, and foot by foot we crept up towards the base of the tower. Victory! Victory! was the cry of our hearts. We were close to the walls now—the Maid had seized a ladder, and with her own hands was setting it in position, when—O woe! woe!—a great clothyard shaft from an English bow, tipped with iron and winged with an eagle's plume, struck upon that white armour with such crashing force that a rent was made in its shining surface, and the Maid was borne to the ground.

Oh, the terrible fear of that moment! The yell of triumph and joy which arose from the walls of the fortress seemed to turn my blood into liquid fire. The English had seen the fall of our champion. They shouted like men drunk with victory! They knew well enough that were she dead, they would drive back the French as sheep are driven by wolves.

I had been close beside the Maid for hours; for I never forgot what she had spoken about being wounded that day; yet when she fell I had been parted from her a brief space, by one of those battle-waves too strong for resistance. But now I fought my way to her side with irresistible fury, though there was such a struggling press all about her that I had much ado to force my way through it. But I was known as one of her especial personal attendants, and way was made for me somehow; yet it was not I who was the first to render her assistance. When I arrived, De Gamache was holding her in his arms; someone had removed her head-piece, and though her face was as white as the snowy plumes, her eyes were open, and there was a faint brave smile upon her lips. De Gamache had his horse beside him, his arm slipped through the reins.

"My brave General," he said, as the Maid looked in his face, "let me lift you to my saddle and convey you to a place of safety. I have done you wrong before; but I pray you forgive me, and bear no malice; for I am yours till death. Never was woman so brave."

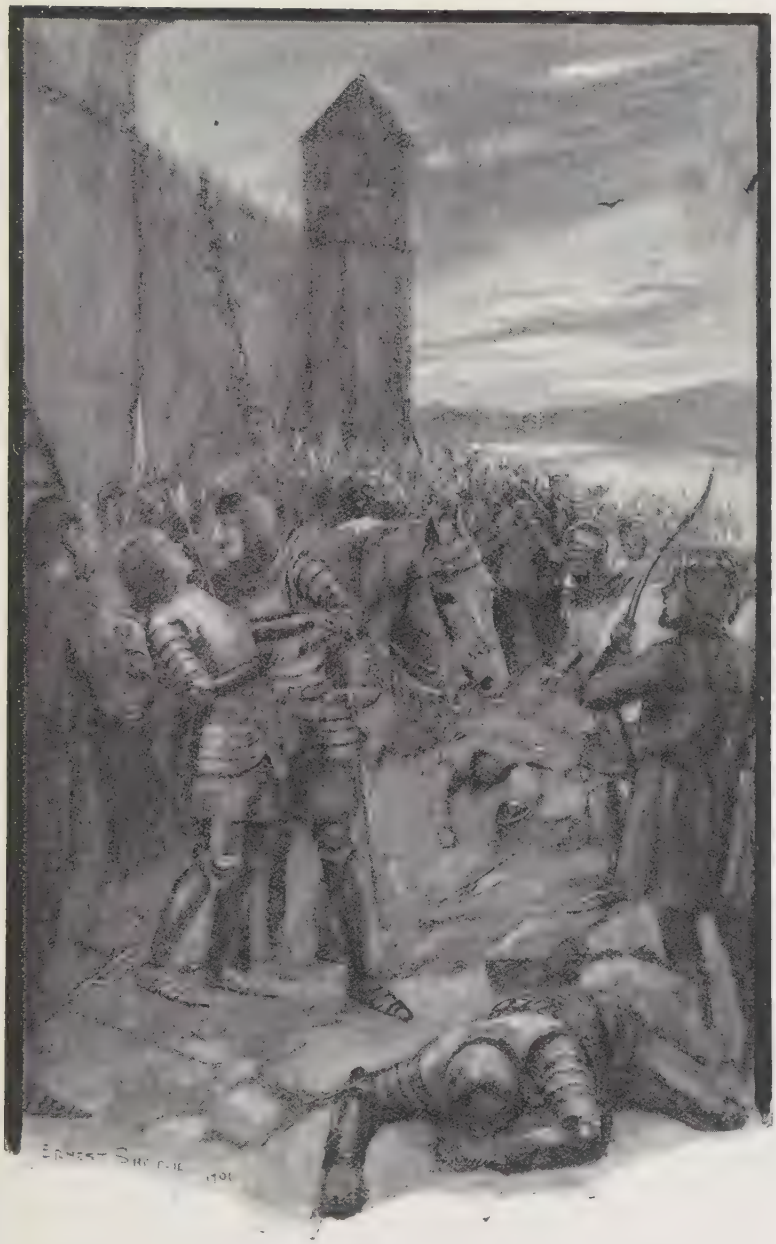
"I should be wrong indeed to bear malice against any, my good friend," spoke the Maid, in her gentle tones, "above all to one so courteous, so brave"

We lifted her upon the horse. We formed a body-guard round her. We drew her out of the thick of the press, for once unresisting; and we laid her down in a little adjacent vineyard, where the good Pasquerel came instantly, and knelt beside her offering prayers for her recovery. But the great arrow had pierced right through her shoulder, and stood out a handbreadth upon the other side. We had sent for a surgeon; but we dreaded to think of the pain she must suffer; must be suffering even now. Her face was white; her brow was furrowed. But suddenly, as we stood looking at her in dismay, she sat up, took firm hold of the cruel barb with her own hands, and drew it steadily from the wound.

Was ever courage like hers? As the blood came gushing forth, staining her white armour red, she uttered a little cry and her lips grew pale. Yet I think the cry was less from pain than to see the marring of her shining breastplate; and the tears started to her eyes. Never before had this suffered hurt; the sight of the envious rent hurt her, I trow, as much as did the smart of her wound.

The surgeon came hurrying up, and dressed the wound with a pledgett of linen steeped in oil; and the Maid lay very white and still, almost like one dying or dead, so that we all held our breath in fear. In sooth, the faintness was deathlike for awhile, and she did beckon to her priest to come close to her and receive her confession, whilst we formed round her in a circle, keeping off all idle gazers, and standing facing away from her, with bent, uncovered heads. Was it possible that her

Lord was about to take her from us, her task yet unfulfilled? It was hard to believe it, and yet we could not but fear; and our hearts were heavy within us during that long hour which followed.



"WHEN I ARRIVED DE GAMACHE WAS HOLDING THE MAID IN HIS ARMS. THERE WAS A FAINT, BRAVE SMILE UPON HER LIPS."—(*p.* 334.)

And the battle? It was raging still; but the heart of it seemed to be lacking. The English were crying out that the White Witch was dead, taunting their foes with being led by a woman, and asking them where she was gone to now. Dunois came hurrying up for news of her. The Maid roused herself and beckoned to him to come to her where she lay and asked him of the battle. Dunois told her that the courage of the men seemed failing, that he thought of sounding the retreat.

For a few moments she lay still; her eyes bent full upon the blinding blue of the sunny sky. Then she spoke.

"Sound no retreat, my General," she spoke "but give the men a breathing space. Let them draw off for a brief space. Let them eat and drink and refresh themselves. Tell them that I will come to them again; and when you and they see my standard floating against the wall, then know by that token that the place is yours."

Dunois went his way, and soon the sound of the struggle ceased. There came a strange hush in the heat of the noontide hours. The Maid lay still a while longer; then raising herself, asked that water should be brought to cleanse away all stains from her hands and face and her white armour. That being done she called to D'Aulon and said to him.

"Take the great standard; plant it again upon the edge of the moat; and when the silken folds touch the tower wall, call and tell me; and you, my knights and gentlemen, be ready to follow me to victory!"

Did we doubt her ability, wounded as she was, to lead us? Not one whit. We looked to our arms; we stood silently beside her. We watched D'Aulon move quietly forward to the appointed

place, and unfold the great white banner, which hung down limply in the sultry heat of the May afternoon. He stood there, and we stood beside the Maid a great while; she lay upon the heap of cloaks which had been laid down to form a couch for her, and her hands were clasped and her eyes closed as though in prayer.

Then a little puff of wind arose, followed by another, and yet another—soft, warm wind, but we saw the folds of the banner begin to unfurl. Little by little the breeze strengthened; breathlessly we watched the gradual lifting of the silken standard, till, with an indescribably proud motion—as though some spirit was infused into the lifeless silk—it launched itself like a living thing against the tower wall.

"It touches! It touches!" cried D'Aulon.

"It touches! It touches!" we shouted in response.

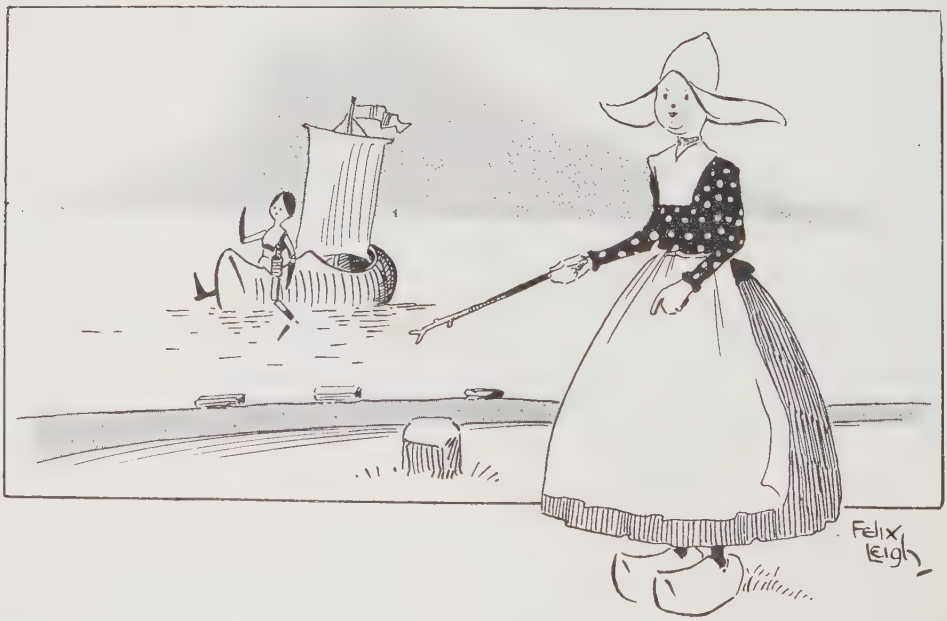
"It touches! It touches!" came an echoing wave of sound from the soldiers watching from their resting places.

The Maid was on her feet in a moment. Where was the weakness, the feebleness, the faintness of the wounded girl? All gone—all swallowed up in the triumph of the victorious warrior. "Onward! Onward, my children. Onward, *de la part de Dieu*! He has given you the victory! Onwards and take the tower! Nothing can resist you now!"

Her voice was heard all over the field. The white folds of the banner still fluttered against the wall, the white armour of the Maid shone dazzling in the sunshine as she dashed forward. The army to a man sprang forward in her wake with that rush, with that power of confidence against which nothing can stand.

The English shrieked in their astonishment and affright. The dead had come to life! The White Witch, struck down as they thought by mortal wound, was charging at the head of her armies. The French were swarming up the scaling ladders, pouring into their tower, carrying all before them. Fighting was useless. Nothing remained but flight. Helter skelter, like rabbits or rats, they fled this way and that before us. Not an Englishman remained upon the south side of the river. The French flag waved from the top of the tower. The seven months' siege was raised by the Maid eight days after her entrance into the city.

(*To be continued.*)



A DUTCH MARINER.

A Dutch doll sailed in a Dutch sabot,
With a Dutch "Good-bye" and a Dutch "Heave Ho!"

And a quaint Dutch maiden let him go,
For she knew that his boat was safe if *slow*.

How to Sleep for Health & Beauty.

A VERY HARMFUL POSITION IN WHICH TO SLEEP.

The sleeper, in drawing up the knees and throwing up the arms, is increasing the action of the heart.

By GEORGE POCOCK.

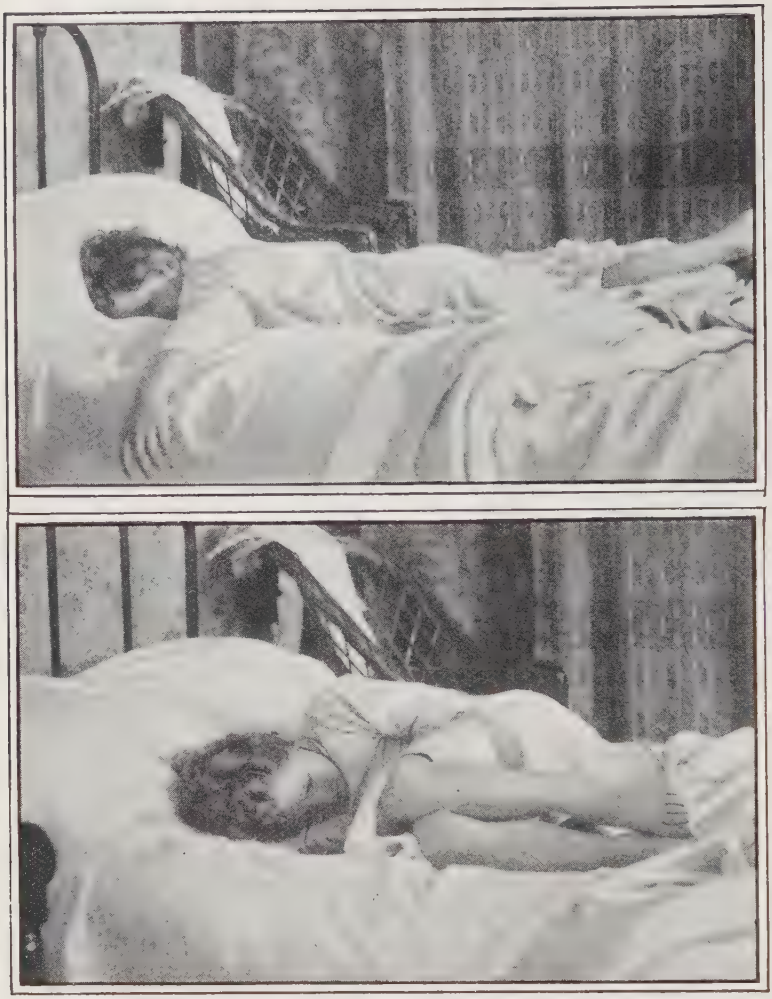
Illustrated by Special Photographs.

"Sleep, balmy sleep,
That knits up the ravelled sleeve of care."
Shakespeare.

One quarter of one's life is spent in bed—with many it is fully one half—yet how few people ever give a thought to whether they sleep correctly or not? That is, do they compose themselves to sleep each night in the most hygienic way, and to get the fullest benefits therefrom? People may be divided, broadly speaking, into two classes in so far as sleeping is concerned. There are those who are fastidious about the bed and its appointments, and cannot have too much luxury about them. Then there are those who are indifferent, so long as they have a bed to stretch themselves upon for the night.

Those who know what an ideal bed should be, and have it, are comparatively few, though their numbers are increasing. But, after all, a bed is only a means to an end, and it is not so much the article itself that we have to consider. The great question is how to sleep in it to get the best rest and most refreshing sleep. One need not have a bed at all, and yet get a most comfortable sleep, while another, on a luxurious downy cot, will awake tired, and with bones aching. It resolves itself into the question of position in repose. Very few people take a correct posture when sleeping, and a still less number retain such a posture during slumber. Once asleep they can never know what abnormal and extraordinary attitudes they assume. If a series of pictures could be taken of most people during one night's sleep, the result would be most amazing to the sleeper. Never having given any thought to it, but tumbling into bed, in a tired and careless manner, because it is time, what wonder that they toss about with the most unhealthful contortions?

If people did but know, or knowing, cared, they would be far more thoughtful of the positions assumed in sleep. How can one be held accountable for his or her actions during the unconsciousness of somnolence? Simply by a little careful thought when composing one's self



A SLEEPING CHILD ASSUMING THIS POSITION SHOULD BE STRAIGHTENED OUT.

to sleep for the night; a well-composed mind will control the body even in sleep.

This time of sleep is certainly the time of which one should be most regardful, considering the long duration of the postures, and the fact that when thus at rest Nature is quietly but effectually carrying on her restorative action. It is not too much to assert that if more care were given to this matter, and children were taught to lie correctly in bed, we should not have so many short women and men. It is largely during sleep that the natural growth of the individual takes place, not in the waking hours of work and play. How necessary is it then that every help should be given Nature, to the end that straight, well-formed bodies may result! It is impossible to sleep properly in the soft beds, with high bolsters and a number of pillows with which many people surround themselves nowadays.

THIS POSITION IS MORE LIKELY TO CAUSE DREAMS THAN LYING FULL LENGTH UPON THE BACK.

A soft bed is enervating, not restful. It embraces the body and the circulation is interfered with, the skin being thus unable to throw off the impurities in a natural way, and the tissues become flabby and weak in consequence.

In the same way pillows are unhealthy and unrestful. Observe how the head sinks into the soft cushions in the photograph — the breathing being thus rendered imperfect, while the muscles of the neck are strained instead of being rested. Yet that is the position assumed by millions nightly. The flesh of the face instead of being untouched and impassive through the night, is half covered always, and the pressure upon it even by the soft pillow screws the face out of shape, and causes unnatural folds that, in time, form into wrinkles. There is nothing so good as a moderately hard bed, without pillows—or with very little—to make firm, round, smooth flesh.

Physiologists are still unable to state definitely whether the brain is congested or anæmic during sleep, and so a reasonable doubt is admissible; but it has been most conclusively demonstrated that the lower the head the

deeper is the sleep, and the more it is raised the lighter is one's slumber. Certainly a person sleeping in a sitting posture is more easily awakened than one reclining.

It is urged by those accustomed to many pillows that they never could sleep without them, but it simply seems so to them because no determined effort is ever made to try the other method. Naturally, if one has used several pillows for years, it will take a persistent trial of some months to prove that going without them is beneficial. Many girls, and women especially, suffer from constant headaches, which are due to high pillows and nothing else. A number of instances have come within the writer's notice where pillows have been forbidden by the physician, and the headaches have totally disappeared.

To say what would be the correct way for everybody to sleep is far from the purpose of this article. Each must find out what is best after having absorbed certain principles applying to the subject. The best plan will be to point out several incorrect positions, and show why they should be avoided, with some correct positions, and the reasons therefore, and allow the reader to benefit thereby, or otherwise, according to inclination.

It is often asserted that it is unhealthy, and predisposes to dreams, to lie prone on the back, but no reasons that are adequate are given for this statement. Now, there are at least two aspects to it. Lying flat upon the back almost invariably causes the jaw to fall forward. This opens the mouth and the breathing is thus done through that organ instead of the nostrils. This is decidedly unhealthy, and causes snoring, These two effects are what lead to dreaming far more often than troubles and cares. It is not the mere position that causes dreams or nightmare. To lie flat upon the back with little or no pillow, the body extended to the full, and the arms resting easily at the sides, or preferably folded across the breast, and the mouth kept closed, so that the breathing is regular and normal, one is less liable to dream in this than in any other position.

You will often hear people spoken of as terrible snorers in their sleep, as though it is some affliction they are not responsible for. But

THE MOST COMFORTABLE AND HEALTHY OF ALL SLEEPING ATTITUDES.
A handkerchief folded under the chin and tied at the top ensures breathing through the nostrils.

if those who dream and snore unnaturally would only take the precaution to tie up the head by means of a handkerchief, folded and placed under the chin and tied at the top so as to prevent the lower jaw from dropping, as shown in one of the photographs, they would find the trouble would not occur. This simple precaution also would prevent many a cold and sore throat which are often mysteriously and unaccountably acquired.

Compare the apparent ease of the position where only the bolster is used with that in which the head is buried in pillows. Any one wishing to try the experiment of abandoning pillows should do so gradually.

THE MOST UNCOMFORTABLE OF ALL SLEEPING POSITIONS. A SLEEPER WILL LIE THUS FOR HOURS WITHOUT MOVING.

This would seem to support the theory that sleep causes the brain to become anæmic.

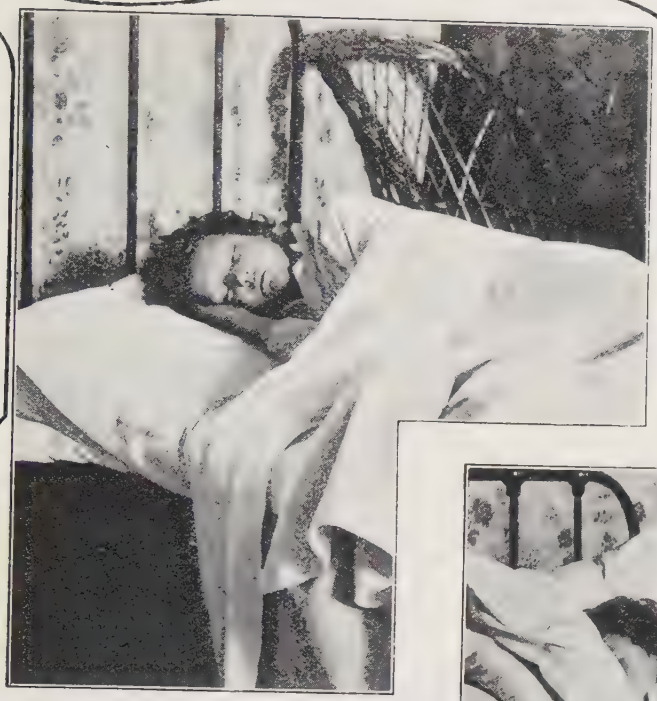
Observe the ease of the position in which there are neither pillows nor bolster. The body is at perfect rest, fully distended, graceful; there is just sufficient give in the mattress for the shoulder. The question, what to do with the arms, is one which each sleeper must work out. If one arm is deliberately laid upon, it is apt to stop the circulation, and so cause that sometimes painful effect called "pins and needles." When one hand is placed beneath the cheek as shown, it is a comfortable position, but if it is placed downwards in front of the body it is not comfortable unless the body be turned to a peculiar angle. If it is kept in front, the body must incline slightly backwards. The better plan is perhaps to throw the body forward, with the arm behind, thus reclining partly on the side and slightly on the chest. This gives an almost perfect position in sleep, and there are any number of niceties of posture which may be assumed to suit individual peculiarities.

Note also in another photograph the sleeper has been caught in a doubled-up posture. The body, in sleep, has slid from the bolster, in an unconscious attempt to get comfortable, and taken a flat position.

This is very common among children, and (contrary to the belief of some, that they should not be disturbed) it is a sign of restlessness from discomfort, and the child should be adjusted, straightened out and made comfortable. If this is done in childhood, and children are taught how to sleep correctly, they will do it naturally in after years, without any of the disturbing influences that seem common to most grown-ups.

As to whether the right side or the left is the better to sleep on, opinion is divided, and perhaps there never will be any generally satisfying decision about it, because after all it is only a detail which must be determined by individual characteristics of the sleeper. It has been claimed that lying on the right side strains the muscles of the heart, and that it is bad for the liver and digestive organs. While this may be so in some instances, owing to functional weaknesses or derangements, it can by no means apply to a healthy person.

There is a tendency to right-sidedness in most individuals which makes this the favourite side to sleep on. It is true that during sleep assimilation is most active. Circulation is equalised, the work of the vital organs is



THE PERFECT SLEEP.

The body at full length, reclining upon the right side, no muscle strained.

THE EVIL OF MANY PILLOWS.

The face sinks into the pillows, causing it to fold and crease into wrinkles. Natural respiration is impeded.

THE SNORER.

Lying with head and shoulders raised, the jaw drops forward. The sleeper thus breathes through his mouth instead of his nose, which causes snoring, and is responsible for colds.

lessened, and it may be that this position is, considering these facts, an advantageous one.

A bad position, though a very common posture in sleep, is one in which the sleeper lies prone, face forward, as shown in another photograph. It is decidedly unhygienic, and anyone lying in this position should always be turned over on to the side or back. The attitude will

cause dreams far more frequently than lying on the back.

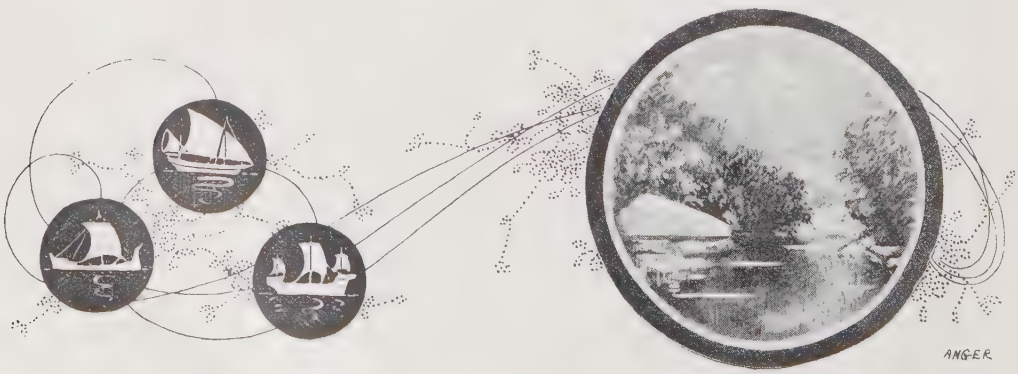
An equally bad way to lie in bed is that with the knees drawn up and the hands thrown upward above the head. The sleeper gives the heart extra work to do in sleep, and is thereby likely to arouse disturbances, which, though they may or may not lead to dreams, yet certainly cause restlessness, and lack of that refreshing repose which sleep should bring. Anything which interferes with a regular even circulation will do this.

Of course people can, and do, accustom themselves to anything. We Europeans, and Americans as well, are accustomed for the most part to soft beds and feather pillows, and plenty of the latter. The Germans go in for the feather bed, a big fluffy affair, in which the body sinks out of sight, and then they draw another bed over them. The Chinese and Japanese prefer the hard bed, and for pillow have, as a rule, a block of wood. The Russians sleep in winter in a hot room, often right over a stove, and in this respect the people of the north of China and Korea follow suit. In the warmer climates of the south the people invariably double themselves up when sleeping. The Laplander and the Esquimaux crawls into a fur bag made of reindeer skins.

The hygienist of to-day, however (and there are some among all different peoples), sleep on a hair or a pneumatic mattress, with a very small pillow of the same kind (or none at all), and with an open window. And sleep is taken, too, on the right or left side, according to which may be most agreeable, and change once or twice a night from one side to the other without waking.

When you consider seriously how much of your time is spent in bed, does it not seem rational that your health and figure and good looks must be very much affected by the manner of your sleeping?

If you will sleep correctly, it can be laid down as a certainty that you will grow younger, more healthful, and beautiful, because it is while you are sleeping that you are growing. The flesh will become firm, the curves graceful, wrinkles will be softened or avoided altogether, and this all through a little care. As a rule one does not stop to consider what the facial expression is when falling into slumber. Yet it is important that some thought should be given to it. It is at night when about to go to sleep that all the disagreeable happenings of the day crowd into one's mind, and, thinking of the cross words and the unpleasant incidents, the face is apt to become constantly lined most disagreeably. This, persisted in, becomes permanent. Now what should be done is to chase away all unkind and troubling thoughts, and assume a beatific expression. Think of all the pleasant things possible and let the face take on the lines of contentment, and so falling asleep thus habitually—in the waking hours the countenance will be one that is good to behold for its natural sweetness.



The Elephant and the Dentist.

By A. L. HARRIS.

Illustrated by T. Cromwell Lawrence.

THE dentist was flattening his nose against the window and wondering why people didn't come and have their teeth pulled out, when there came a ring at the bell, a bashful, undecided sort of ring—as though the ringer was more than half inclined to make a bolt of it—that to the ear of the dentist meant business.

He heard the front door open and shut, followed by a sound as though an earthquake was trying to walk on tip-toe. The next moment the surgery door was burst open by the boy whose duty it was to answer the bell, clean the knives, and sharpen the teeth. He had a card in one hand, about two feet by one and a-half, and was pale to the collar.

"He's in the waiting-room," he began, "leastways, as much of him as could get inside, and he says he's rather in a hurry, as he's an engagement with the town band at three o'clock, sharp. Shall I fetch the perlice, or what?"

The dentist looked at him in some displeasure.

"Certainly not," he said, "that would be very unprofessional. But there," he went on, more leniently, "it's the first time you've ever seen a patient, so it's not to be wondered at. Show him in, Alphonso. Wait a minute, though. Did he come on foot, or in a cab?"

"In a furniture van drawed by six horses," was the answer. "It's a-waiting round the corner. You can see it if you puts your head out of winder."

"Dear me," said the dentist, "what a very stylish turn out. I wonder what the neighbours thought of it. Show him in, Alphonso, show him in."

"Thank you," said a muffled voice without, "I'll show myself in, that is, all I can squeeze through. Why don't you have the doors of your cages made larger?"

The dentist gave a yelp and tried to sink into his boots; the boy cried, "It wasn't me!" and made an unsuccessful attempt to secrete himself in the coal scuttle as the elephant pushed open the door with his trunk and introduced his head and shoulders.

"I hope I don't intrude," he said, in the same muffled tone, which, no doubt, was partly accounted for by the fact of the greater part of his face being swathed in what looked, at first sight, like a variegated cotton pocket handkerchief, but proved, on closer acquaintance, to be a patchwork quilt. "I hope I don't intrude, but I'm a little pressed for time, and this double tooth—I mean tusk, of mine is enough to drive a performing elephant wild. The question is, can you stop it?"

"The tooth or the ache?" inquired the dentist, trying to look as though he was accustomed to see elephants drop in unexpectedly at all hours of the day.

"Both," said the patient. "It'll be half-price, of course," he added, "as I'm under twelve."

"Under twelve!" exclaimed the dentist.

"Tons," continued the elephant, "and I shall be most happy to recommend you to my friends. There's my neighbour, the crocodile, for instance. I call him my neighbour because he generally travels in the next van to me when we're on tour. I know he's worried about his teeth. Only the other day he was wondering what would be the cost of a complete set—a set that would play 'Home, Sweet Home,' or the 'Last Rose of Summer,' when you bit on them."

"I'm afraid that would be rather expensive," said the dentist, doubtfully. "It would come a good deal cheaper—particularly if he happened to have rather an open countenance—to have them set in gold."

"Just what I told him," answered the elephant, "only he seems to have taken a fancy to have them set to music."

"Is he much of a musician?" inquired the dentist.

"I should say about three or four times the length of this room," answered the elephant. "But then he's always polishing up his scales. In fact he has a thorough taste for music. Only last week he swallowed a piano organ whole, before breakfast. But about this tusk of mine," jamming a little more of himself through the door-

"THE DENTIST DODGED THE BOTTLE, WHICH CAUGHT ALPHONSO UNDER THE CHIN AND BOWLED HIM OVER."—(*p.* 344.)

way. "Do you think you can make a good job of it? Bother this thing, it's got into a knot!"

Finally, he managed to rub the counterpane off against the doorpost, and showed a swelled face and a hole in his left-hand tusk you could put your fist in.

"Wait a minute" he remarked, and, fumbling in his trunk, he produced a bunch of gold watches.

"Here," he said, "I thought these might come in useful."

The dentist looked somewhat surprised, so the elephant explained.

"For the stuffing, you know. It's a good, big hole, and I've been collecting 'em for some time. That's the best of carrying a ready-made trunk. You can feel in people's pockets, when they're feeding you with buns after the performance, and all the time look as though it wasn't you."

"Rather a er—irregular proceeding," remarked the dentist.

"I don't know what you mean by irregular," replied the elephant, "though, to be sure, I do sometimes get hold of a silver one by mistake; but that's not *my* fault, if people *will* carry them. But hadn't you better be melting this lot down?"

"Alphonso," said the dentist, in a resigned, don't-blame-me-I-didn't-do-it sort of voice, "you can put on the saucepan—no, *not* the one with the hole in the bottom—and mind you don't let it burn, or boil over."

Alphonso crawled from under a table, and obeyed orders with evident reluctance; the elephant watching the proceedings from the doorway, with anxious interest.

"You're—you're quite sure it's done enough?" he inquired nervously, as the dentist took the saucepan off the fire and blew on the mixture to cool it.

"Done to a turn," was the reassuring reply. "Now then, Alphonso, sit on the patient's head and keep him steady. I flatter myself I have made rather a neat job of it," he added a few minutes later.

"And you don't think the stitches will show?" asked the elephant anxiously.

"Only in the dark," answered the dentist. "Besides," he went on, "a stitch in time saves nine. Consequently, the more you put in and the larger you make them, the less there are in the long run."

"Quite so," said the elephant. Then "dear me," he exclaimed, "What's that? Gingerbeer? I'm fond of gingerbeer."

And, stretching out his trunk, he reached a bottle off the mantelpiece.

"Stop!" cried the dentist. "Stop, I tell you. Don't drink that, whatever you do. It isn't——"

"Never mind about a glass," interrupted the elephant, knocking the neck off against the doorpost. I'd just as soon drink it out of the bottle. Ha," smacking his lips, "That's first-rate, that is. What might it cost you a dozen, now?"

"There's no knowing what it might cost me a dozen, *if* it was gingerbeer," replied the dentist. "But it isn't. It's laughing gas!"

"You don't say so," said the elephant, playfully throwing the empty bottle at his head. "*What* a joke! Ha ha ha!" The dentist dodged the bottle, which caught Alphonso under the chin and bowled him out; while the elephant laughed until the tears ran down his trunk and every window in the street rattled. Then, catching sight of a box of matches in the dentist's waistcoat pocket, he whisked them out in an instant.

"I'm on the strike," he said, laughing harder than ever.

The first match he struck was a failure, the second gave a feeble splutter and died out, the third——

There was a flash! a crash!! a bang!!! a wild peal of laughter! a strong smell of gas!! and *no* elephant!!!

"If he *should* call again, Alphonso," remarked the dentist, a little irritably, as he looked at the hole in the ceiling, "I hardly expect him to, but if he *should*, just say I'm engaged. What's more, if this sort of thing happens again, I shall be obliged to put up a notice to the effect that patients are respectfully requested to leave by the front door."

"CATCHING SIGHT OF A BOX OF MATCHES IN THE DENTIST'S WAISTCOAT POCKET, THE ELEPHANT WHISKED THEM OUT IN AN INSTANT."

A LITTLE SAINT FRANCIS.

By the late KATHERINE DOUGLAS KING.

Illustrated by Jessie Macgregor.

Somebody had given Derrick a book called "The Little Flowers of Saint Francis of Assisi," a book which relates with old-fashioned simplicity certain edifying doings of the Saint of Assisi and other Brothers Minor. Derrick was eight years, and could already read words of two and three syllables. The "Little Flowers" was his inseparable companion for five weeks, during which time he seemed to be revolving deep matters in his brain. The cover of the "Little Flowers" was of olive green leather, adorned with gold; at the end of the five weeks the book bore such vivid marks of close and loving handling that it looked as though it had come out of a mud pie. But by this time Derrick knew his favourite stories, the miracles, by heart.

Derrick's home at this time was the ward of a Children's Hospital, attached to a religious house. He had fourteen companions, for, counting himself, there were fifteen boys in the ward; and out of these fourteen he had one special friend—Jamie, a boy with a pale, sweet face, dark hair, and gentle eyes. Jamie was four years his senior in age, but compared to him a mere infant in worldly knowledge and experience. Derrick's was the master mind; Jamie was content and happy only to follow where his junior led.

Derrick was as fair as Jamie was dark. He had soft round cheeks like the petals of pink rosebuds; his head was something like a seal's in shape, and his eyes were as bright as stars.

Derrick and Jamie were what were called "up-boys" in the ward. They wore very short striped blue and white knickerbockers, dark

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The pen that wrote this story is stilled for ever. Katherine Douglas King died last spring in the prime of her young womanhood. She had written much during the few years of her literary activity, "The Scripture Reader of St. Mark," "Father Hilarion," etc., and some short stories, two of which appeared in "The Girl's Realm."

Nearly two years ago she married the Rev. E. Burr, Vicar of Rushall, Walsall. It was a very happy marriage, and the young wife was looking forward to many years of literary productiveness, when Death came and led her away to the eternal rest beyond. She died leaving twin babies to her husband's care.

"She lies as if in dewy sleep she lay; awake her not! Surely she takes her fill of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill."

blue blouses, and blue and white striped pinafores. Derrick had scarlet stockings, Jamie grey. Both boys had a hip trouble; in Jamie's case one leg was shorter than the other, and this made him hop along like a bird. Derrick was straight enough, but he oscillated curiously from side to side when he walked.

It was Derrick's way to throw himself heart and soul into anything that interested him, and his interests were varied and comprehensive, from the best way of feeding goldfish to Gregorian music. His fund of information, like his interests, was of a varied and peculiar character. He had an opinion to offer upon every subject, and advice for all who would listen. When he was managing an affair for someone else he was in his glory.

After five weeks' deep study of Saint Francis and his miraculous doings, Derrick told Jamie in confidence that he intended to become a Brother Minor when he should be a man, and in the meantime he proposed to devote himself to performing miracles. Jamie, who had unbounded faith in his friend's powers, rapturously applauded the idea, and begged for a miracle on the spot.

To prepare himself for his exalted *rôle*, Derrick had already adopted a dove-like manner and a mediæval mode of speech. It happened that the boys were at dinner when he confided to Jamie his glorious destiny. The Sister in charge of the ward saw them whispering together at table, and called them to account for this breach of manners. The rebuke was a splendid opportunity, and Derrick never missed opportunities.

"O Sister, thou little sheep of God," he began with much devout simplicity, but with a sparkle in his lowered eyes as a stony silence fell upon the ward. "Sooth it is, I do deserve to be punished. Natheless I—I implore thee not to punish Brother Jamie, who only spoke when he was spoken to, as we are all told to do."

"Brother Jamie," tittered nervously; the other boys stared excitedly. They were used to Derrick's eccentricities; but hearing a Sister addressed as "Thou little sheep of God," they began to wonder what would happen next. Derrick folded his hands demurely, and looked into his empty plate. He was wishing he had referred to himself as a "vile wretch," or even a "poor little one"; but the phrases—often in the mouth of his favourite Saint—were not easy ones to fit into a sentence without more practice than he had yet given to mediæval speech. But he contented himself with thinking that he would employ one or other when he was asked if he would have more pudding.

The Sister kept her countenance. All she said was: "Get on with your dinner, boys."

After dinner Derrick chose his Brothers Minor. There were Brother Jamie, Brother Big Tom, Brother Tommy, Brother Samuel, Brother Dick, Brother Solomon—a nickname—Brother Teddy, and Brother Baby Benedict. The rest would not join the Order, because they were all older than Derrick, and did not choose to call him "Father Derrick," and remain simple "Brothers" themselves.

These formed a rival band—of pirates; and offered to fight the Brothers Minor in a pitched battle, the up-boys with their fists, the bed-boys with peashooters and knotted towels. Derrick refused; he knew such fighting as the pirates contemplated would not be allowed in the ward. But he smiled a smile neither meek nor martyr-like, when the pirates called him "coward," "baby," and other opprobrious names. His eyes sparkled triumphantly. There was a chance of being persecuted after all!

These preliminaries took up all the time between dinner and vespers at three o'clock. Derrick sang at vespers with all his wonted fervour. When the organ pealed out, and the voices of the children and the Sisters in choir rose up in praise and worship, a new exultant fire flushed his cheeks, and lighted up his shining eyes. And as his own voice sang of the glory and omnipotence of the God of heaven and earth, his childish heart swelled to think that nothing—not even a miracle worked through him, Derrick—was impossible to that glory and that omnipotence.

The thought grew and grew until his heart was ready to burst, and his whole soul seemed on fire with faith and longing. But whilst singing the last antiphon he collapsed suddenly, and lay face downwards on the tiled floor, weeping so

passionately that his sobs were audible throughout the chapel, whilst "Alma Redemtoris Mater" was ringing out from organ and choir.

After vespers he retired to his cot, and, all dressed as he was, lay concealed from view under the bedclothes; he was ashamed of his tears; but he consented to get up again when he found no one laughed at him. He had dropped his dove-like meekness, and assumed an air of truculence and bravado combined, that struck awe into the hearts of the pirates. But his intention to work what Jamie called "a truly miracle" was not weakened one jot.

His manner shielded both his faith and his resolve from curious eyes; but underneath that shield they burnt like an undying fire. His method of performing a miracle was simplicity itself: one had only to pray for it seven times —"for seven is a holy number," he said—"and *believe*."

He expounded these things in whispers to Jamie when the lights were out that night, and they were lying in their cots side by side and supposed to be asleep. His faith was perfect; so was Jamie's faith in him. Most of the other boys were asleep. The sister on night duty was in the girls' ward, beyond the little ward kitchen. A boy in the bed on the other side of Derrick turned on his side and moaned.

He was not asleep, this boy; he rarely fell asleep until after midnight, and he was generally awake before the morning Angelus rang out from the chapel tower. Day and night for him were full of anguish and despair. He suffered much physical pain at times, but it was not that which filled his cup of misery. His was the agony of a tortured soul. He was fourteen. Up to his twelfth year he had never known an ache or pain. Then a terrible accident to his spine left him a hopeless cripple. Two or three hospitals had discharged him, and with his own ears he had heard his doom: "Incurable." As one for whom science could do no more, he came to the Sisters. In this last refuge of helpless hopelessness he had been but three bare weeks, but to him it seemed already an eternity. In the other hospitals, boylike, he had always clung to hope. The words that pronounced him "a helpless cripple all his life," killed all hope within him, and with hope dead his very soul seemed dead.

The long days crawled by with leaden, sullen hours, but the nights were more dreadful still. For as the lights went out the past came back; and when the ward was still and quiet a thousand thousand memories of his childhood and young boyhood rushed upon him, and would not be driven away. They were always the same—memories of his active life when he could run and leap and play about. And the contrast between that time and this was more than he could bear.

Though he was but fourteen and had all the hopelessness of despairing youth, his bitterness was less that of a child than of a man who has proved life vain. Every ardent hope he had once possessed, every warm affection of his boyish heart, all faith, all desire were merged into one passionate longing—a longing to walk again and "be like other boys." And day by day this passion of his life grew in intensity of desire, as day by day its hopelessness sank deeper into his soul.

He had a home far away in the Black Country, but he was not wanted there. Already it held too many children; it could not hold a helpless cripple too.

It was late in December, and the glowing embers of the fire shone like eyes out of the darkness. The boy's bed was near the fire. In the red-hot coals he saw pictures of himself as he had been in the days before his accident. In a sudden frenzy of despair and rage he half raised himself in bed and struck with all his strength at his own crippled legs. They were bent and twisted, and helpless and heavy, as though they had been made of lead instead of flesh and bone. His arms were long and terribly wasted, but the accident which had hopelessly injured his spine had left the upper part of his body whole. Then he fell back and moaned again—not through bodily pain. What he suffered of that he did not count as anything.

Jamie and Derrick stopped in their whispered talk, and there was silence in the ward, save for the irregular breathing from the double line of cots.

"That was the Boy," said Jamie in an awe-struck whisper through the bars of his cot.

In the ward the incurable cripple was called "The Boy." He had refused to answer to his proper name—from what sad and childish reason only he knew. So the other boys called him the Boy, and kept aloof from him, all but Derrick, who had noticed that he never said his prayers with the other children, and had set to work to remedy this unhappy state of things. But the Boy declined to pray. He did not believe in Derrick's God, so he declared; and whenever Derrick began to expound to him the doctrine of the Incarnation to prove his case, he would either shut up his ears and pull the bedclothes over his head, or stop him with a furious retort.

"Derrick," whispered Jamie, after another short silence. "Did you hear? That was the Boy!"

There was no verbal reply from Derrick's cot, but there was a rustle—a slightly guilty noise as of some one crawling over the rail and slipping to the floor. The next moment came the stealthy sound of bare feet on the ward floor.

Derrick stood by the Boy's bed, a tiny figure in a short, grey flannel night-shirt, his head but a few inches above the top of the rail. The Boy's eyes gleamed fiercely out of his white, wasted face; in the firelight they looked like two wild creatures chained, and raging against their chains. The Boy had beautiful features, big black eyes, and long, dark, curling lashes, but now his face was pinched and shrunken with disease.

"Does your back hurt, Boy?"

An oath was the sole reply. A shocked, angry look struggled with the compassion on Derrick's childish countenance. The Boy's mood was beyond his comprehension, and his was a nature as passionate in its way as the Boy's.

"I 'spect you're feeling bad to-night. P'raps your back hurts extra, and you don't know what's you're saying," he said, after a pause, and a short inward struggle with a furious retort. "Would you like my squashy pillow, Boy?"

"Oh! shut up!" exclaimed the Boy, with a fierce muffled cry.

"Oh, all right! I'll shut up!" returned Derrick with dignity, and shivering, as a draught from the door of the ward kitchen found its way to his bare legs.

"Well, shut up, then, and leave me alone!"

Derrick reluctantly retreated towards his cot; but hearing the Boy call after him by name, he turned quickly, and with radiant face staggered back again. Nothing disheartened him so much as a rebuff; nothing pleased him so much as to be appealed to for help, protection, or advice. And lo! the Boy was asking his opinion as an authority upon religious matters!

"You know about religion—God, and prayers, and such-like?" began the Boy, in the same fierce, strangled voice.

Derrick's bright eyes gleamed with a sudden light, both deprecating and exultant. Was the Boy at last going to ask him to teach him how to pray?

"Well, tell me," burst out the Boy again before he could speak. "Do people walk when they're dead—not here—in the other places?"

"I—I never knew for certain!" gasped Derrick, utterly taken aback and unprepared. "I—I should say yes."

Derrick shuddered. He began to realise that the Boy's was a hopeless case.

"How d'you pray? Ar' Father s'art in heaven?"

Derrick was uncomfortably silent. He hated to seem incompetent to give counsel or information, yet his conscience warned him that advice on prayer in this matter would be wicked; and Derrick, whose hot temper led him to say many dreadful things he did not mean, was desperately anxious not to be more wicked than he could help.

"I'm goin' to pray—that I may die, and die quickly. I don't want to go on living this life—worse than a chained dog's, or a caged rat's!" said the Boy, in short gusts of speech, so passionate and inarticulate, Derrick could scarcely follow him. "An' you can pray for me, too, if you pray for wot I want. If you won't, you can jest go—so there!"

"Boy?"

"Shut up!" returned the Boy, fiercely.

Derrick fled as fast as his staggering legs per-

mitted. He crawled under his own cot, and sought refuge on his friend's beyond. Jamie was sitting up in bed, waiting for him with an eager light in his gentle eyes.

"You said there's nothing in all the whole world you can't do, didn't you, Derrick?" he began breathlessly.

"Oh! oh! don't you start worrying me now, 'cause it's more than I can bear!" broke in Derrick, in a muffled voice, and with a despairing sob.

"But, Derrick, don't cry! I mean a miracle, you know."

"Why! I know what you're talking of, now!" exclaimed Derrick, with sudden excitement. "The Boy——"

"Yes! Can't you——"

"I know what you mean, now! A miracle!"

"Yes, yes! Make him well, so's he can walk."

Derrick fell headlong to the floor. It was the quickest way to get out of bed. The noise caught the ear of the Sister who was boiling milk for a sick girl-child over the little gas stove in the kitchen. She put her head in at the door of the boys' ward just as Derrick disappeared beneath the bedclothes. His rapid scaling of the side of his cot, and his scrambling into bed, were, in their way, feats almost akin to miracles. He lay panting and quaking beneath the clothes, fearing detection, but chiefly occupied with his tremendous thoughts.

The Sister made a hasty survey of the cots and their occupants. The Boy pretended to be asleep. He did not want to be questioned. Derrick snored faintly. Jamie's eyelids quivered nervously. Then the Sister, after making up the fire, went back to the girls' ward. Nobody in the boys' ward needed special watching; the Boy's was the worst case, but his was chronic, not critical.

Derrick fell to the floor with more care this

"EVERY SPARE MOMENT FOUND DERRICK HANGING OVER THE RAILINGS OF 'THE BOY'S' COT."—(*p.* 352.)

time. In another moment he was by the Boy's side.

"Boy, Boy, do you really want to walk?"

The Boy half raised himself in bed, and looked at him. A little flame had broken through the coal when the Sister made up the fire, and the flickering light fell full on his face. There was a look on it, wild and sad beyond telling. His mouth twitched, but he said nothing.

"'Cause I can cure you!" gasped Derrick, with flushed cheeks and shining eyes. "I never thought of it afore, 'cause thinking of miracles is only new to me since I read the 'Little Flowers'; but truly, truly, Boy, as truly as I stand here, an up-boy, and you lie there, a bed-boy, I can make you walk again."

"He doesn't mean hisself," explained Jamie breathlessly, who had followed his friend—also with bare feet and grey night-shirt—to the Boy's bedside. "He means by a miracle; he can work them. He knows all about it."

Jamie stood peering anxiously over Derrick's shoulder at the Boy's face. The strange look on it frightened him. Derrick seized the Boy's hands, and squeezed them excitedly.

"Yes, I know all about it!" he exclaimed, in a voice trembling with earnestness, whilst his eyes glowed and dilated until they seemed on fire. "I can make you walk by a miracle, Boy."

"Rot!" exclaimed the Boy, furiously.

"Truly, truly I can, Boy! Not me, of course, 'cause I'm only a boy; but by a miracle. Listen! This is the way! I shall put my hands on you—your legs this time, and pray and *believe*, that is the great thing, and you will walk. I will do it seven times—seven days, that is the best number—and, of course, you can't expect a thing all at once, for the first asking! but seven times, and then you will walk."

"Rot!" burst in the Boy again, impatiently.

"But it isn't, Boy! Oh, do, do let me try—and don't keep on saying 'rot,' it puts me off so! Do, do let me just try; indeed I can. It's not rot or pretence or a game; it's truly real."

"As if I believed all that! You may believe it, but it's all a lie all the same."

"But it's not—I swear it's not, Boy; it's truly real. You don't understand these things, but I do, and Jamie does, and you would if you were religious, too. In a week you will walk! Why, you want to walk, don't you?"

Again that dreadful look of misery shot over the Boy's face, and his mouth twitched, as when Derrick had asked him the question before. Yes, he wanted to walk. He did not believe in miracles. He believed in death, and would have killed himself if in other worlds he could reasonably have hoped to move about with free, unfettered limbs. So he gave Derrick to understand. But he consented to be experimented upon. He wanted to prove Derrick's religion a lie to Derrick's face. And Derrick believed in his religion and his miracle—it was easy to see that!

"On Christmas morning the miracle will take place!" Derrick announced joyfully. "The first miracle in the ward, but not the last! After that I will make Brother Baby Benedict's crooked legs straight, and after that I will take away Brother Samuel's hump."

The Boy laughed—a short, sardonic laugh.

"It's not me, it's God," explained Derrick, with glowing eyes and flushed cheeks. "I can't make crooked legs straight, or say to humps 'Go,' and they go. But God can."

"Then why doesn't He, without all this rot?"

"Because He doesn't choose to, so there! Oh, dear! Why will you make me get angry? But Boy, please, please while the miracle's going on, don't talk of—of Him like that; and you'll say prayers, too, won't you?"

"Don't know any."

"But you can say what I teach you, and I'll teach you hundreds and hundreds—so your head can't hold 'em. Oh, Boy, we shall be happy, you and I, doing this miracle."

"But what if it don't come off, after all?"

"But it will, Boy."

"But if it don't—just supposing it don't; you must say that your religion's a lie."

Derrick said nothing; he only shivered. The draught on the floor was chilling his bare feet to the bone.

"Seven days," said the Boy, in a low, strangled voice. "I'll see it through, just to prove to you. Then. . ."

"Then what? You'll be running about, an up-boy. I shall ask Sister to-morrow to get up a suit of clothes from the store-room. I won't say who for, only a big suit, with trousers. We'll make it a surprise. They won't guess a miracle's going on if we don't talk of it."

Jamie tugged at the tail of Derrick's night-shirt as a gentle reminder that it was getting late. He was very chilly, and half asleep. Derrick scarcely felt the cold, though he shivered involuntarily at the draught; and he was too excited to feel sleepy; but he yielded to Jamie's hint.

"Good-night, Boy," he said with an affectionate squeeze of the Boy's hands, and a singularly comprehensive wink and smile. "We'll begin to-morrow, and that'll just make it seven days to Christmas. Good-night, Boy; go to sleep and dream of running about the ward, and pretending to be a fire-engine in a crowd, like Solomon does."

"Good-night, Boy; I hope you'll be better to-morrow," whispered Jamie over his shoulder.

"Good-night, both of you. Yes, we'll begin to-morrow, and I'll go to sleep now, and dream —dream of running about—running about—my God!"

The Boy's last two words were inaudible. They were a cry of despair to the God Whom he defied. He tried to be patient, so far as men and things were concerned. He had tried to be patient ever since he had been carried, crushed and mangled, from the scene of his accident—a terrible boiler explosion in a factory town—into his first hospital. It was unmanly to whine and cry and make a fuss, he thought. Only with God and with himself was he not patient.

There was no compensating element for him in the altered conditions of his life. He knew nothing of religion beyond the few crude ideas he had picked up as a wild and active boy. Nature he loved passionately, without knowing his love. The song of a bird, the sight of a wild flower growing, gave him keenest pleasure. But more to him than these was his joy in movement—in free and active life—he, who must spend his life henceforward imprisoned to a bed, between the walls of a London ward.

Derrick fell asleep repeating the prayers he was going to teach the Boy. He wanted the Boy to love God. Equally ardent as his desire to see the miracle accomplished, and the Boy on his feet, was his longing that the Boy should, in his turn, adore his God. The Boy believed in a dreadful God—One Who hated His creatures, and deliberately tortured them more than they could bear. Derrick meant to change all that!

His thoughts brought a smile to his childish face, a smile that lingered while he slept the long, dreamless sleep of innocence. On Christmas morning he had thought, when all the children were met in the ward for the children's service, the Boy himself would be one of those kneeling before the altar, kneeling, an up-boy, with Jamie and himself, instead of lying flat in bed, a cripple.

* * * * *

But the Boy himself knew better. He knew the age of miracles had passed. He was fond of Derrick. Once he had been a boy of ardent affections and passionate warmth of heart. He had generous impulses still. He lay awake long that night, and once there came a ball to his throat, and a sudden rush of tears to his eyes, at the thought of Derrick's bitter disappointment and grief when Christmas morning should come, and the miracle prove a failure after all. Poor Derrick—and poor Boy! He had no tears for himself; he had shed them all long ago. If he could have wept, he could have prayed; but there was no room in his heart for tears or prayers.

* * * * *

Christmas Day was to fall on Sunday. During the preceding week Derrick lived in such a whirl of secret prayer and faith and exaltation, that he was almost knocked up by Saturday. Every day of that busy week brought some additional labour to the regular routine. Decorations, music, carols, Christmas cards, Christmas letters, and visits from friends and relatives —all combined to fill up the hours of days already distractingly full of other interests. The great event was the Christmas Midnight Service which the whole hospital, if well enough, was going to attend. The boys threw themselves heart and soul into the preparations. Derrick practised the music of the service with a zeal

and fervour that wore out the other boys, who vainly tried to equal him in attention to their notes.

By Christmas Eve there were dark circles under his brilliant eyes, but he was undaunted and tireless still; and his exultation was at such a height that several times he called a Chapter of his Brothers Minor, and rehearsed with them some glorious Alleluias, which they were all to shout out when the miracle should be consummated. Derrick did not explain precisely to the Brothers Minor the nature of the event that was coming off, but gave them to understand that great things were to be done in the wards on Christmas Day. Some of the boys thought it was the Christmas tree; others a conjuror; Brother Baby Benedict a tea-party; he went about all that week one large seraphic smile. Jamie alone, except the Boy, was in Derrick's confidence.

The Alleluias, sung to music of Derrick's own composition, were tremendous things, and distracted the rest of the ward extremely, especially as all the Christmas decorations were being put up. Derrick helped in this, too. Like most of the other boys, with or without crutches, he had a weakness for climbing ladders and standing on ledges at perilous heights from the floor. Also he had decided opinions as to the most artistic method of hanging up banners and chains of paper flowers; and although his opinions frequently conflicted with the opinions of those in authority, his advice was seldom disregarded when it came to a practical question of ways and means.

In addition to these manifold labours, he achieved prodigies of prayer. Every spare moment found him hanging over the railings of the Boy's cot, his small hands spread over the Boy, his face rapt. When he was called away to his ordinary duties, he set Brother Jamie to pray over the Boy.

By the afternoon of Christmas Eve he was so excited he could not pray coherently. His excitement was infectious. Tea was at four, and directly after tea the children were put to bed to be ready to get up at ten for Matins and the Midnight Service. All this in itself was unusual and exciting. The ward looked singularly sleepless as, clad in flannel night-shirts and bed-jackets, it hung over the railings of cots and exchanged opinions on the joys of Christmastide.

Derrick, as usual, was the last in bed. He had stayed up to clear away a litter of torn paper from the bed of Brother Baby Benedict. Brother Baby Benedict was not as exemplary in behaviour as it behoved a Brother Minor to be; and early in the day he had surreptitiously got hold of one of the banners and had torn it up to make butterflies. When the ward should be asleep he had intended to set them alight, and start them flying up the chimney. It was quite his own idea, and he was looking forward to an evening of splendid sport when Derrick discovered the torn banner under his pillow.

Derrick had been looking for this banner all day long, at intervals. He gave Brother Baby Benedict a look that would almost have drawn tears of remorse from a stone. Brother Baby Benedict dived under the bedclothes, and the red quilt shook with the convulsive movement of his baby shoulders, but he was shaking with laughter, not sobs. Far down at the bottom of his bed was a chain of paper flowers. Later on, when Derrick should have retired, he meant to crawl out of bed, set light to them, and watch them dance up the chimney like stars.

The ward was very still. Most of the boys were sleeping. Even Derrick, worn out by work and prayer and watching, had fallen asleep. But the Boy was not asleep. He lay thinking over coming events. At eleven he would be dressed in a dressing-gown and carried up to the Chapel for the service. That would be a distraction, for he had never been to the Chapel, nor seen a Midnight Service, though he had been present at several ward services since his arrival at the hospital. But the Boy did not want distractions; he only wanted to be well again.

After the service he would be carried down again like any other cripple, and again put to bed. Then in the morning he would awake, and the weary day would begin again. It would begin with another service in the children's ward.

Derrick had a programme of his own. He was to wake up early, while the other boys were still asleep, and was to awaken the Boy, and

the Boy was to respond by leaping out of bed, whilst Derrick shouted out "Glory to God in the Highest and on Earth Peace to Men of Goodwill." The Boy did not know what to make of Derrick's religion, but he knew his own case was hopeless, and that he would never walk again. He wondered what he should say to Derrick, and what Derrick would say to him, when his crippled legs refused to do their part.

He began to dread the morrow with a new and nervous dread he had not known before. After that week of prayer and faith, it would not be easy to shatter Derrick's religion before his eyes. It would have to be done, but it would not be an easy thing to do.

And after?—He had an iron constitution, and before his accident had never known a day's illness. Life had a terribly tenacious grip on him. He had heard doctors say he would live for years, perhaps till he was an old man. The Boy set his teeth and clenched his hands. The pain in his back was not worse than usual, and he was not thinking of it. He was looking at the coming years in the light of two just passed. *Years?*—and one day was so long!

A Sister came in and made her round to see that all was right. When she went out she left the door ajar. The voice of one of the girl-children crying could be faintly heard. Soon it was hushed, and there was again silence through the wards. The Boy lay staring at the ceiling where the red firelight threw flickering shadows. In all the shadows he saw himself as in the days of old.

Presently a stealthy, rustling noise caught his ears; then the sound of some very diminutive feet pattering along the floor. Turning, the Boy saw a tiny object bearing swiftly down the ward. It passed his bed, and in the light of the glowing embers he saw Brother Baby Benedict crawl up the big hearthstone in front of the iron guard before the fire.

There was a guilty look on Brother Baby Benedict's babyish face. He had a little round head and body, and legs so small they were scarcely worth mentioning. He was quite a baby. The Boy knew he was not allowed to play with the fire; and he knew, too, by Brother Baby Benedict's sly expression and guilty smile, that he was quite aware he was at a forbidden game.

"Baby Benedict," called the Boy softly, from his bed; "drop that paper and go to bed."

Brother Baby Benedict started violently, and, in his surprise, nearly lost his balance whilst hanging over the top of the guard. He adroitly recovered himself, however, and after a moment's agitated pause, he began affectedly

"BROTHER BABY BENEDICT WAVED A FLAMING PIECE OF PAPER ROUND HIS HEAD."—(*p.* 354.)

to hum a little tune, and pretending to have heard nothing, somewhat hastily went on with his game, which was setting light to his paper chains, and watching them burn away into feathery ashes at the bottom of the grate.

"Baby Benedict," pursued the Boy, with rising intonation, "if you don't go to bed this instant I shall call Sister."

"Shut up!" politely returned Brother Baby Benedict, who was considerably less than half the age of the Boy, and a mere baby to look at.

"Shut up yourself, and don't be cheeky!" retorted the Boy, angrily.

Brother Baby Benedict waved a flaming piece of paper round his head. This was his baby way of showing defiance. Unfortunately he waved his little torch with such vigour that he set light to the paper fringe of a banner hanging above the hearthstone. Instantly a long tongue of flame shot up the side of the wall. With a strangled howl of terror, Brother Baby Benedict dropped his torch and sprang off the hearthstone. Being weak and tottery on his legs, he stumbled, slipped, and fell over.

It happened he fell to that side of the hearth where the burning banner hung. The tongue of flame had reached another banner still higher. There was no danger of the solid stone work round the hearth catching alight; but burning bits from the banners were falling in masses to the ground, and one piece had fallen on the tail of Brother Baby Benedict's night-shirt and was burning a little round hole in it. Brother Baby Benedict himself lay perfectly still, a little heap without sound or movement. He was quite conscious, but was paralysed with fright.

How the Boy managed it he could not say! But moved by sheer impulse at sight of Brother Baby Benedict's peril, he rolled to the side of the cot where the rail was kept lowered, dropped to the floor, and began to crawl towards the hearthstone. But by this time a Sister had rushed in to the rescue, and several of the other boys had awakened. As it seemed to their dazed eyes, the Sister came down the ward in three bounds, and almost before the Boy had reached the floor she had snatched up Brother Baby Benedict, and in the same second stamped out the last fragment of burning paper.

So soon as he felt himself safe, Brother Baby Benedict set up some heart-rending cries. They woke up all the other boys who were not yet awake. Derrick opened his eyes suddenly, and sprang out of bed.

He had been dreaming the Boy was running a race with him and had won! He thought the excitement in the ward was the beginning of the miracle, until he saw the Sister pick up the Boy, put him back to bed, and feel him carefully all over to see he had received no fresh hurts. Apparently the Boy was none the worse. The fall had bruised him a little; otherwise he seemed unharmed, and only with reluctance would he let his bruises be attended to. Derrick hovered around in an agony of suspense.

"Boy," he whispered eagerly, leaning across the rail of the cot when the Sister had done her work by the cripple's bed; "Boy, did you feel a leggy sort of feeling, 's if you could really walk at last, and that made you jump out of bed—did you, Boy?"

"Oh! I'd—I'd forgotten the miracle," said the Boy faintly, with a sudden pang of dismay, almost of terror.

Derrick was ignominiously hustled into bed before he could reply. Gradually the excited ward was quieted down again, and sleep and silence reigned once more. But still the Boy did not sleep. Derrick had fallen asleep with a prayer uttered aloud on his lips. How could the Boy sleep, thinking of that, and of Christmas morning, and of Derrick's God, worshipped and adored with such passionate love and faith—and the God he was to prove a Cheat!

The eventful night was still young when the ward was awakened for the Midnight Service, and the Boy, clad in dressing-gown and jacket, was carried into the chapel to lie amongst the other helpless cripples who could not stand or walk. Derrick, having encouraged the Boy with nods and winks and mysterious signs, settled himself in his accustomed seat by Jamie's side, marked his places with the book-marker in his big service book, and frowned at Brother Baby Benedict, who, unabashed by his recent experiences, and a lecture, was staring

about him in a way both distracting and indevout.

The Boy closed his eyes wearily. The lights on the altar seemed to blind him. For the moment he had forgotten his own misery, and he was thinking only of Derrick and Derrick's faith. When he opened his eyes again they were dim with tears.

The service had begun; they were singing the Introit. The Boy could hear Derrick's sweet clear treble above the other boys. It was past twelve. Derrick's eyes shone exultantly; but to the Boy the Birthday of the Incarnate God meant only the dawn of another hopeless day.

"Oh Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us!"

The Boy heard the words, and knew their meaning; Derrick had told him the night before. He looked dimly before him with his weary eyes. Above the altar was a figure he knew—the figure of One Crucified.

Presently the service was over, and the children were taken down again to the wards for bed and sleep. The Boy was carried down with the other helpless cripples. The children soon fell asleep—not to wake until it was time to rise and prepare for the second service that would bring in Christmas morn to the wards. Even Derrick was soon asleep, although he had planned to pass this time between the two services in prayer and watching. All slept but the Boy; his tired eyes would not close. But at last, as the night passed and the morning broke, he, too, slept.

And during that dawning a wonder came to pass, and Derrick's miracle was fulfilled. For whilst the Boy slept, One came to him and made him whole again. In his sleep the Boy seemed to see Him holding out to him His arms, and calling him by name—the name he would not answer to in the children's ward. But he answered now.

What he said only One knew; but he died with tears on his cheeks and a smile on his boyish lips.

In trying to save Brother Baby Benedict the Boy had over-strained himself, and ruptured a vessel of the heart. They had not expected him to die so soon. The doctors had thought he would live on for years. At first Derrick did not understand when they told him what had happened that Christmas morning whilst he and the other boys were sleeping. He had believed the Boy would jump out of bed, whole and strong again, and at the service, with Jamie and himself, would kneel before the altar and acknowledge his God to be God and Lord. And now there was only an empty cot in the ward. He could not sing at the service for crying.

But the Boy kept the Eucharist Feast in Heaven.

MARSH LOCK.

(Photo. by Photographic Tourists' Association.

THE HIGH-CLASS COOKERY CLASS.

The Making of the Housewife.

A VISIT TO THE NATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL OF COOKERY.

By CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

THE education of the future so far as girls are concerned is, undoubtedly, the education which includes practical work as well as theoretical training. To her knowledge of figures and verbs, to her enthusiasm for sport, the modern girl has some additions to make. Hands no longer are to lie meekly folded while brains are busy with learned and wonderful calculations; a ladylike pose is no longer to be confused with idleness. The best and the keenest pleasure has been discovered to be attached to the making of something useful; all the world of girls is alive to the new dignity conferred on skilled labour of any description.

For the days of mere "accomplishments" have gone by. Even piano-playing at last is being recognised as a fine art. Girls have travelled, have seen the world out of their clear-sighted eyes. They have discovered how a smattering of accomplishments is of no account whatever in a real world of art; how splendid a thing it is to be properly trained in any one direction; above all how very necessary it is that every girl should be thoroughly equipped in the useful and ordinary matters of life. For that equipment, though it may be acquired through difficult years of experience, some sort of definite training is indispensable. The business of living, so far as girls are concerned, has been left far too much to the chances of life. It is a question whether

or not any girl—no matter how nobly born—can afford to be without some small knowledge of cookery, dressmaking, or house management. These ordinary and tiresome every-day affairs intrude themselves into the lives of almost any girl at some part of her career. One girl may be a brilliant pianist, and have to house-keep for her husband in the backwoods of America; or a Princess of blood Royal may find it a comfort to be able to dressmake; while for ordinary and middle-class people, it is quite indispensable that all their girls should be properly trained in the first principles of good house management.

Photo. by Photographic Tourists' Association.

THE ARTISAN COOKERY CLASS.

To prove that an adequate training in these is appreciated when it is to be had, no better evidence can be given than the great success which has attended the National Training School of Cookery in London. This School was inaugurated in 1873, on an experimental basis, for the teaching of practical cookery. Nobody had thought very definitely up till that time, how a theoretical knowledge of the food values in relation to the science of cookery might produce good cooks, as well as long and valuable treatises on the subject. But probably nowadays we all quite understand that a little knowledge of the effect of acids, of the values of essences, might save us the hundred and one little agonies which beset us when we cook on chance, and season foods according to the temper we happen to be in.

The National School of Cookery from its first beginnings has demonstrated what important results are to be had from a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge of the science of cookery. Much of the great success of the School must be attributed to Mrs. Charles Clarke, who from the second year of its existence has been Lady Superintendent.

From being the first School in the country to hold classes for practical cookery, the National School of Cookery has now developed into a Technical School for training in all branches of house management. Cookery,

laundering, housewifery, needlework, and dressmaking are included in the curriculum. A girl may either take a complete course of these, and, by getting through the course successfully, receive her diploma as teacher; or else she may qualify in separate subjects. The best evidence of the careful training to be had in the School under the wise guidance of Mrs. Clarke is to be seen in the immediate results. For, in spite of all cramming and theories, the proof of a pudding still lies in the eating, and the dishes to be had on any term day at the National School of Cookery are proof of the excellence of the training to be had under the supremacy of Mrs. Charles Clarke.

The School originally held its classes at South Kensington. At the Fisheries Exhibition and other Exhibitions, a system of cheap dinners, sixpenny fish dinners and others, was so admirably worked by the School of Cookery, that in 1889 the School was enabled to pay all debts and hold the handsome surplus of five thousand pounds. This money enabled the directors to build the present splendid School in Buckingham Palace Road, London.

The building was formally opened in 1889, and has since been added to. It has been wholly constructed as a School for teaching cookery, laundering, etc., and there one finds all the best and latest contrivances towards the easing of labour, and the encouragement of neatness in the different processes. This fact alone ought to be of great benefit in future homes, for it is difficult to introduce better and more efficient furnishings into the home kitchen when girls never see further than their own four walls. To many of these the making of some dainty things remains a remote mystery to the end of their days, all for the want of some small contrivance to be had quite easily in the shops, if one had only been properly informed on the matter. For instance, in such a case as the ironing of a blouse, with which many girls are quite familiar, most people take endless trouble towards getting sleeves and corners moulded nicely out on the flat, and invariably lose their temper over a not very successful result. In the National School I saw girls ironing blouses over a serviceable block, neatly, easily, and deftly, with the best possible result. These conveniences extend to proper laundry stoves, to splendid gas stoves with ovens properly protected from the gas fumes, to specially nice cake boards and cooking utensils, all in themselves part of the education which the School affords.

The rooms and kitchens are well lighted and well ventilated. Most of the working rooms are on the ground floor and sub-basement, and lead well out to the back of the School, where extra top light is to be had. On the first floor are the board room, the lady superintendent's room, and a dining-room and drawing-room for resident students, of whom there are, as a rule, from twenty to twenty-four. On the second and third floors are bedrooms for resident lady pupils. All this special accommodation makes the School of great value to girls from the country, who in other circumstances find boarding in London a difficult and unenjoyable business.

Girls who are taking the full course of training, including practical housework, have therefore, in the School itself, full opportunity for perfecting themselves in every part of the routine of housework. They keep the School in order, and have special training in each subject; down to the cleaning of kitchen utensils. It is a noticeable fact in all Schools of this description that maidservants, even when quite untrained, who show themselves often very stupid in simple rules of cookery, appear to advantage in the scullery; while the wits and memory of a well educated girl help her to reason out her cookery recipes, but desert her among her pots and pans. Yet there is an art, even in the treatment of pots and pans, to be learned in the School of Cookery.

On any day except Saturday one may view the School, and see there the perfection of detail which helps towards a good result. Teachers, in neat print dresses and aprons, are either on guard with a bevy of girls whose work is being closely supervised, or else a teacher demonstrating has a roomful of attentive listeners, ready with note-book and pencil. From the prospectus, and even from a visitor's point of view, the various studies and courses a girl goes through in the School seem so numerous as to puzzle a new comer. But the fact is, the

School makes provision for so many people, from the girl who is to construct a profession out of her studies to the people who take an occasional odd lesson to help with home housekeeping, that a business of unravelling besets the casual visitor. One has to discern the difference between the artisan, the household, and the advanced sections; between practical work and demonstration. The whole course is divided into the different divisions of cookery, housewifery, dressmaking, needlework, millinery, practical tailoring, and laundry-work. These are all sub-divided into many and various divisions.

Photo. by Photographic Tourists' Association.

IN THE LAUNDRY OF THE SCHOOL.

The School curriculum includes a thorough course of washing, starching, ironing, and the care of different laundry utensils.

For the full cookery diploma one finds girls engaged first in getting up scullery work and artisan cookery by demonstration and practice. Ten weeks must be devoted to these subjects. Then for twelve weeks household cookery is practised, while fourteen weeks must be given to superior household practice, classes of demonstrations and criticism lessons. The last six weeks are spent in the children's classroom; where some of the classes are conducted entirely by the students themselves, under the supervision of a teacher. Besides all this work, certain hours have to be devoted to chemistry and to high-class theory.

The syllabus of knowledge required of students who want to obtain the cookery diploma includes a number of items regarding scullery work—how to light and manage a fire, the management of different ranges, good methods of cleaning utensils and removing stains, etc. In the School I saw girls burnishing patty tins, making every one of them bright and clearly shining. Then, in other places, heard others at work demonstrating to children; not only showing how to cook, but giving good reasons for their recipes. For part of their training lies in the why and wherefore of things.

All through this training in theory and practice, Mrs. Charles Clarke never allows her pupils to forget that no knowledge of acids or essences, no diplomas in chemistry, and no clever way of demonstrating the cooking of a

dish, makes up for an unsatisfactory result. The dishes in the National Training School must look pretty and taste very good, or no diploma is granted.

The hard part of the training for the teacher's diploma lies in the dual responsibilities of being able to cook well, and at the same time of acquiring the gift of imparting knowledge to others. Girls have to train their memories, their every action, to the work of the moment. They must control the interest of their listeners, and also keep remembering all that is gone before; all that is to come. Demonstration practice involves the study of elocution, much quickness of action, and neatness of habit. The training of the National School of Cookery provides fully for these essentials.

The diploma for housewifery demands thirteen weeks' training. The subjects included are needlework, upholstering, practical housework, and sick-nursing. In the needlework section, the uses of old sheets and blankets are taught; pupils learn darning, patching, buttonholing, the sewing of tapes and buttons, paper folding, etc.

I saw girls hard at work upholstering mattresses, learning the ins and outs of things we take, as a rule, blindly and trustfully ready-made from the shops. These girls learn, besides, how to stain floors, etc.; also how to remove other kinds of stains. At other times they study the theory of house management, how to arrange work, how to direct servants, how to store food, how to ventilate, light, and warm a house—these sometime besetting griefs to many well-meaning people who are more often ruled by their circumstances than desirous of altering them.

For the dressmaking, needlework, and millinery diplomas, the course includes an exhaustive amount of particular training. There are fifteen weeks of dressmaking, fifteen of plain needlework, three months' course of practical tailoring, two months of advanced needlework, six weeks' course of millinery to be gone through. Pupils learn how to draft different patterns, and finally how to carry out their designs; demonstration classes are held in every branch except that of millinery, which is not taught by demonstration. In plain needlework, students are trained to teach all stitches used in plain sewing by means of the blackboard and demonstration frame.

For the laundry course, students must study twenty hours a week for twenty-six weeks. Besides a knowledge of how to wash, starch, and iron, students must understand how to cleanse their materials, how to care for the different utensils used in laundry work.

At the end of a successful course, such as is here delineated, with its accompanying diploma, a girl is qualified to teach the foregoing subjects in schools. The Education Department recognises the diploma, and Government Schools frequently employ teachers who have been trained in the National School of Cookery.

A visiting *chef* makes a constant inspection of the School, and helps, along with the impetus given to students through having to train for a diploma, to keep the School at a uniform pitch of excellence.

OUR GREAT VOTING COMPETITION.

We are going to press just as the great voting competition is closing. The result has been tremendous, no less than 300,000 voting papers having been sent out! All the editorial staff, with additional helpers, have been almost overwhelmed by the flood. And now there lies before us the task of counting and tabulating the votes, with the determination that the results shall be published in the next number of the magazine, published on the 15th of February. To show what a huge success the competition has been we may say that in our utmost calculations we had only reckoned that 100,000 coupons would be called for. The Silver Charms sent out to our readers reach the value of £150! We are very glad to notice the good spirit of the competitors, who nearly all declare that the amusement and interest they have had in the competition will alleviate any disappointment they may feel if they fail to secure one of the larger prizes.

A CLEVER SAVE AT HOCKEY.

From an Original Drawing by MARTIN STAINFORTH.

The following Stories, Essays, Drawings, and Photographs, entirely the work of girls, were held over from "Our Readers' Own Realm," which was published in the January Number of this Magazine.

The Story of a Wooden Bear.

By Ida C. Hony (aged 15).

(*Winner of the First Prize in the Second Class.*)

Travellers crossing the mountains from Lauterbrunnen to Grindelwald often stop at Le Petit Scheideck for refreshment, or to buy something from the stall of wooden ware close by.

Some fifteen years ago this stall was kept by a man named Franz Mechlen. That is to say, he pocketed all the money, and occasionally, when a particularly distinguished-looking visitor came, he would serve him, smiling blandly, and rubbing his hands the while. But all the hard work necessary to maintain the stall fell to the lot of a little cripple named Jean. Mechlen paid him one franc a week, with his board and lodging, which consisted of a very small quantity of very bad food, and a shed to sleep in.

Something else, too, Mechlen gave Jean in return for his hard work, and that was unlimited blows and beatings when he was out of temper (which was only too often the case), or business had been bad.

Nobody who had been served by the polite, smiling boy could divine the pain and trouble he endured. Oftentimes when his smile was brightest, and his manners most perfect, his little body was aching with the hard blows of his master.

One day, towards the end of September, Mechlen told Jean he was going to start early next morning for the Interlacken Fête. "And unless you make six bears while I am gone," he added, "you shall suffer for it."

The boy worked hard all day, and by five o'clock he had finished his fifth bear. He had laid them on the stall, and was gone into his shed to fetch another piece of wood, when a gentleman and lady, with their little girl, came by. The child gazed longingly at the wooden bears, and then cried: "Oh, father, do buy me a bear!"

"Certainly not, Maria," said her father, severely; "no daughter of mine shall learn to waste her money on such useless and ridiculous trifles. Come, along, now, or we shan't reach Grindelwald before it's dusk." And he passed on.

The child, however, lingered behind. "I must have one," she said to herself, and seized a bear. She slipped it into her pocket, and ran on. Jean came out of the shed just in time to witness the theft, and was struck with dismay.

"I have only wood enough for one more," he said to himself; "and if master comes home and finds only five bears——" He broke off with a shudder. His only course seemed to pursue the thief; so hastily seizing his crutches, he followed the travellers as fast as he could go. Two or three times he shouted to them, but it was useless; he could not make them hear. On, on, he ran, forgetting everything except that he must recover the bear. Poor Jean! If only he had known that it was on the grass close to him; for Maria, fearing that she might be found out, had flung away the stolen toy.

The darkness was gathering quickly now, and great white mists came rolling down, and wrapped him in their soft white arms. The mountains towered above him in solemn grandeur, and he stood for a

moment, looking up at them with shining eyes. All the twelve years of his life he had never known what it meant to be loved, but as far as it is possible for human beings to love inanimate objects, he loved the mountains. He had watched them in all their changing moods; had seen their snowy peaks standing, white and dazzling, against the blue of the summer sky, or lit up into glorious shades of gold and pink by the setting sun. He had seen them during storms, half hidden in dark clouds, with the lightning shooting down their sides; and often he had gone out to look at them in the silence of night, the moonlight playing on their slopes, and the starlit sky behind. A feeling of peace crept over him as he looked at them, and his troubles seemed to melt away. It was so now; he had forgotten all about Mechlen and the lost toy as he stood there, until the cold night air made him shiver, and he remembered how late it was growing. With a sigh he turned back and hurried along the rough path, sometimes stumbling in the ruts.

It had become very dark. Jean did not notice a place where the path had crumbled, leaving nothing between it and a long, steep slope. His foot slipped, he stumbled, and fell. For a moment the silence was broken by a sharp cry, and the rolling of stones and earth, followed by a dull thud as the boy's head struck heavily on a big stone. Then all was still again. The little cripple lay dead beneath the mountains he loved so well.

. . . . . .

Some ten years later a young couple, who were, as it was easy enough to see from the fond glances they bestowed on one another, on their honeymoon, came along the path.

"Do you know," the wife was saying, "I did such a wicked thing when I was little, and came here with father? I stole a wooden bear, and then dropped it for fear of being found out."

"If I had known the girl I loved was a thief," said the bridegroom, laughing, "I should have thought twice before I married her;" and then, though there was certainly no reason for it, he kissed her. How should they know that on the hillside below them was a nameless grave, overgrown with Alpine roses and tall blue gentian, where lay the bones of a cripple boy (for Mechlen had buried him where he found him to save the trouble of moving the body), whose death had been the direct result of that same theft?

And the wooden bear? As the young couple passed along, the bride trod on something hard, and, stooping down, she found the bear, half hidden in the grass. They took it home with them, and many years after gave it to their children, who used to call it "the sad little bear," because its eyes had such a mournful expression. Was it thinking, I wonder, of its little creator lying dead and cold beneath the mountains?

HAYMAKING IN SUMMER.
By MARY DE LAUTOUR (aged 20),
Awarded a prize in the Photograph Competition.

The Fakir's Curse.

By RUTH DE VERE ETHERIDGE (aged 13).

(*Winner of the Second Prize in the Second Class.*)

IT was a hot and sultry evening in India. The sun was setting in a bank of golden glory, and as it set it lighted up the sacred river of the Jhelum until it shone like a crimson snake. Mango trees were dotted here and there on its banks, casting dark shadows on the grass, and swaying gently in the hot evening air. Presently three khaki-clad figures of officers rounded the hill.

"What a splendid sunset," cried Elliot, the youngest of the little party, as he gazed admiringly on the beautiful scene.

"If you did not stand staring up at the sun," said Grahame, "you would see something far more important. Look at the hill; why it is the very place to build a house. I wager you could not find so cool a place in all Dustypur."

A SUMMER SCENE.

By MAUDE HANSON (aged 17).

Awarded the Second Prize in the First Class Drawing Competition.

"By Jove, so it is," cried Henderson and Elliot in a breath. "Let us go up and look round."

As they reached the top a white-robed figure of a fakir (priest) came in view. Coming up to where they were standing, he salaamed, and said in Hindustani:

"Preservers of the poor, this spot is sacred, and I have come to place a light on the tomb of this holy man."

"Now, old fellow, that's bosh," said Henderson. "You will have to take your holy man's bones and your own elsewhere. We intend to build a house here."

The priest eyed them sternly.

"If the sahibs build a house on this sacred spot," he said, "the heavens will visit their wrath upon them."

"That's nonsense," said Grahame. "This is the very spot for us, and build a house we will."

The fakir was silent, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he seemed for a few moments to be lost in prayer. Then turning to the officers, he spoke slowly, the red glow of the setting sun lighting his weird and upturned face. "If you do this thing," he said, "the hand of the avenging Allah will smite you in the prime of your manhood by sudden and violent deaths."

After saying this, he drew his white chuddah about him, turned, and went slowly down the hill, where he was soon lost in the evening mists.

The officers turned laughingly away, and as they wound their way down the green slopes, were soon deep in conversation as to the building of the bungalow. It was soon begun and soon finished. Before the winter set in passers-by noticed a pretty bungalow perched away among the mango trees, with the sacred river flowing silently at its foot.

. . . . . .

All Dustypur were turning out in their best, for there was going to be a Polo Gymkana. The pavilion looked very bright in the strong sunlight. The uniforms of the officers and the gay dresses of ladies and children made a pretty picture. Carriages were still driving down the dusty road, for the sports had not yet begun.

At last the signal was given. Away raced the cunning little ponies, following the ball with such rapidity and cleverness that to watch them one would think they were as anxious to win the cup as were their riders. Suddenly the air was rent by a shout; one pony had fallen, and his rider thrown heavily to the ground. A crowd soon collected round the prostrate figure, which was carried into a tent. A surgeon forced his way through, and the people fell back. Presently a whisper passed from mouth to mouth. The injured man was Elliot.

At last the surgeon looked up. "It's all over," he said sadly; "death must have been instantaneous."

There was silence for a space, broken only by the pitying ejaculations of the crowd.

Suddenly a voice from the midst of the people spoke. "The Fakir's curse," it said; "the Fakir's curse!"

. . . . . .

The Rajah of Benares had invited the whole station to a hawking party. So early one morning a large crowd assembled on the Maidan. Some rode the gaily-equipped elephants, and some rode on horseback. Natives clad in the royal scarlet, with their hooded hawks in hand, made a bright patch of colour in their midst. The little Arabs were pawing the ground impatient for the start, when the signal from the Rajah was given, and the party started at a quick pace. The hunting ground was soon reached, and a hawk was loosed. Away it went, swiftly after its prey, amidst the shouting of the excited natives, while the ponies made their way as best they could over the rough and treacherous ground. Suddenly Grahame's pony slipped, and before the party realised what had hap-

pened, rider and pony had rolled over and disappeared down a deep ravine. The chase was stopped, and the natives went in search; but only to find the lifeless body of the rider lying crushed beneath the pony's weight.

The second victim of the Fakir's curse lay dead.

. . . . . .

Four years had slipped away since the building of the bungalow, and one survivor of the three young officers alone remained.

The annual regatta on the Jumna was about to take place. All the officers from the different stations round were competing for the prize. Henderson, being the coxswain of the favourite boat, was untiring in urging his crew to practice. The evening before the race-day the trim little boat could be seen, riding on the calm waters of the river. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, the boat collapsed, and in another moment the five men were struggling in the water. But being good swimmers they struck out for the shore, with the exception of Henderson, who struggled wildly, disappeared, rose again, then sank to rise no more. A search was made for his body, but nothing was found except his cap. The same night, far up in the Punjab, the sacred river rose; and before morn the pretty bungalow was swept away. Thus the last act in this drama was accomplished, and the Fakir's curse fulfilled.

Essay: My Surroundings.

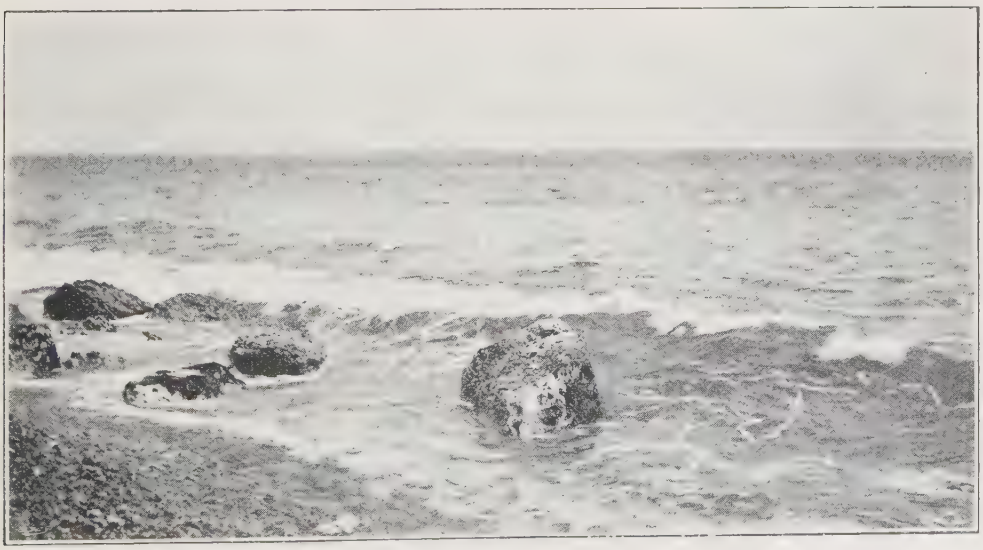
By IRENE MAUNDER (aged 21).

(Awarded an Honourable Mention in the First Class.)

WALKING to-day in a narrow back lane of our great city, I felt thoroughly depressed by the thought of the hundreds and thousands of houses and streets that surrounded me. The bit of sky I could see was dull and grey, the warehouses, shops, and offices were so endless that a horror seized me—a hopeless feeling that I have experienced in nightmare—that I was in the centre of a vast maze, from which I could never escape.

Only for a moment, however; just the tiniest sprig of heather in the coat of a passing stranger sent my thoughts flying away to the dear Yorkshire moorlands that were once my home. What matter if the city streets are close and narrow? There is a place where I have stood, and looked away for miles and seen nothing but sky and fern and heather. Oh, the crunching of the dry bracken under the feet! Oh, the gay, defiant shake with which the downtrodden heather springs erect again! And the sky—why there the sky is a living creature, not merely a characterless background to a host of chimney-pots, as it so often appears in London.

It is a very little village where I used to live, and where I spend my holidays now; consisting of one



A SUMMER SEA.

By J. L. SAXBY (aged 18).

Awarded a Prize in the Photograph Competition.

long cobbled street, with tiny thatched cottages on either side, and our house and the vicarage at one end.

This house of ours was a great square building known as the Hall, and was surrounded by an enormous garden. Every evening, if I could slip out of the house undetected, I would climb the high garden wall and sit there to watch the sun set over the moors; it was to me an awe-inspiring sight, and I went back to the house solemnly.

The little church stood at the end of the village, scarcely twenty yards from our garden gate, and there, Sunday after Sunday, the sturdy Yorkshire people came clomping into their pews, and the yokel choir sang lustily. There, Sunday after Sunday, the dreamy old Vicar preached eloquent, poetical sermons, far over the heads of his congregation, and his plump, practical wife thumped away at the organ.

There were two shops in the village, both miniature co-operative stores in the catholicity of their wares. One of these shops was kept by a blind woman. She knew it by heart, and where each article was kept. It was wonderful to see her weighing things by touch, so accurate was she.

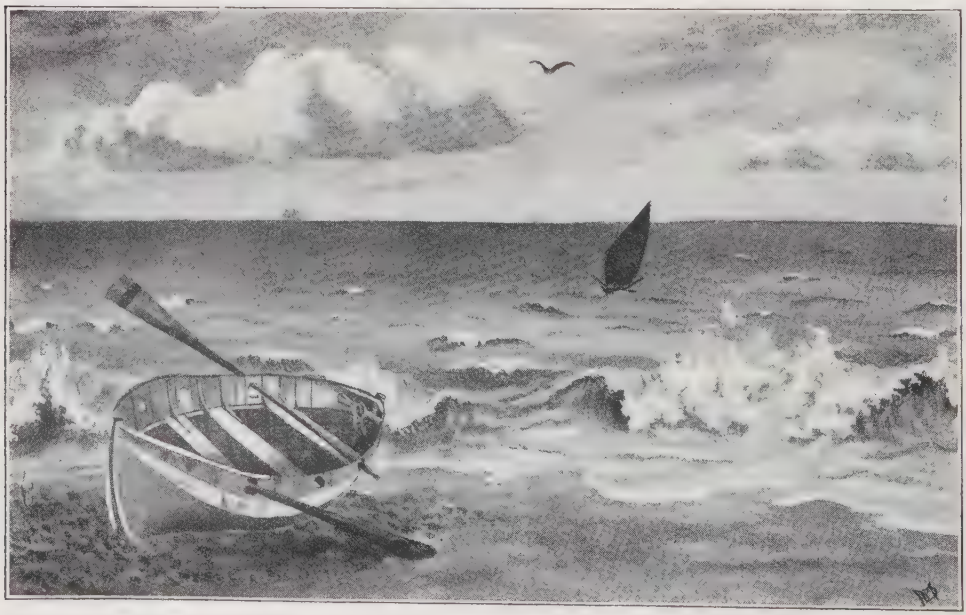
We had a real post-office, not a grocer's shop, with a corner for stamps. 'Tis true it would only accommodate one person at a time, and anyone of more than average dimensions was compelled to enter sideways; but these minor details were powerless to mar the dignity and awe which belonged, in virtue of her office, to our postmistress.

Our village was chiefly inhabited by geese, which promenaded the main street all day long, with outstretched necks and ferocious aspect. I was not afraid of them, but there was a certain big black bull, for fear of which I have often gone far out of my way on my lonely country walks.

Oh, those delicious rambles through the cool green woods, or down the deep ravine that cleft the common from end to end! I know a way down the slope at the farther end of the village, across three meadows (running quickly here for fear of cows), through a little wood, to the most enchanting spot. For there, overhung by spreading trees and great boulders of rock, runs a clear, swift stream. Often and often have I clambered along the beck-side, over tree-trunks and round a protruding mass of rock, to a secluded nook. There, on a smooth mossy seat, I have sat for hours watching the silver fish and tiny water sprites that live in fairy places such as these.

Yet, when I think of Yorkshire, it is not the cool shaded beck I see, nor the darting fish, nor even the merry squirrels that were my daily companions—not little things like these rise up before me—but the wide, wide undulating moor, coloured in purple and gold, and the great red sun on the horizon, dropping out of a flaming sky.

Prize Essays on "My Surroundings," by Eileen Hynes and Flora Sidney Woolf, will be published shortly. In the awards of the Drawing Competition published in the January Number it was R. Case not R. Carr who was awarded an Honourable Mention.



A SUMMER STORM.

By DOROTHEA G. MORSE (aged 19).

Awarded an Honourable Mention in the First Class Drawing Competition.

The Ugly Boy.

By NINA BEHRENS.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—The following little story will specially interest my readers when they know that it was written by one of our most zealous Guild members. One of our greatest pleasures is to be able to give a place in the "Realm" to the work of clever girls who desire to make a start in the literary or artistic world.

They brought him to the dance.

He was a shy, awkward young man; with a red, freckled face, and sandy hair. He stood silently by the door, nervously crossing and uncrossing his hands, vainly trying to hide the large hole in his white glove, and gazing round miserably on the gay scene.

The great hall was crowded with men and girls, young and old, handsome and plain; from the gallery above came the sounds of a waltz; and from the conservatory on the right was wafted the strange exotic scents of Eastern blooms. He watched his handsome elder brother gaily dancing with his lovely partner; he watched his pretty sister as she passed by him on her partner's arm. Then he gazed at the girls standing near him. He was too shy to ask to be introduced to any of them; he knew no one here. The hostess was his brother's friend, not his—and no one knew him.

Suddenly he heard a soft whisper behind—the dance was finished, and the dancers were filing out into the passages.

"Papa, who is that Ugly Boy standing just there? do introduce him to someone."

He turned round and saw his host; and standing beside him was his youngest daughter. She flushed when she saw him turn: she feared he might have heard her careless remark.

Not waiting for her father's reply she went up to him and said shyly:

"You are not dancing: can I not introduce you to some one?"

The Ugly Boy looked at her. She was so lovely. He stifled a sigh and mumbled out some indistinct answer.

The girl flushed. She feared she had been rude.

Then a strange longing took possession of the Ugly Boy, and for once he forgot his shyness and his freckles and his sandy hair, for he said quite boldly—"Can you not spare me a dance?"

The girl lowered her eyes.

"I am so sorry," she began in the conventional tone, "but I fear——"

Then she stopped and looked up. Their eyes met.

"You may have No. 7," she said briefly, and she walked away.

He saw her several times during the evening, dancing with his brother; he himself did not dance once until No. 7, and then he met her at the door as the music struck up.

"I'm tired," she cried petulantly, as he came up, "let us sit it out."

The Ugly Boy awkwardly followed her from the dancing room to a cool nook on the stairs, and there they sat and talked.

The Ugly Boy forgot his shyness, and the girl forgot his handsome brother, and they sat there and talked and talked while one dance, and then two dances slipped by, and people passed and repassed, and strains of music mingled with sweet wafts of the flowers, and they forgot time and place, until, suddenly, there came a rude awakening. The Ugly Boy's elder brother stood before them.

"Miss Gardiner," he said stiffly, "we missed the last dance; but I think this is ours—perhaps though you would——"

And he glanced angrily at his brother.

Then the girl did a bold thing. She was very young and very spoilt, and very pretty, but she had plenty of spirit.

"Yes," she said quietly, looking at her bouquet, "I would rather—if you please."

The Ugly Boy's brother bowed and passed on, and the Ugly Boy opened his eyes wide, and the girl laughed a little and looked away; and for a long while they said nothing, while the noise from below waxed loud and merry.

Later in the evening—quite at the end of the dance, she met the Ugly Boy's elder brother. He took her into the conservatory and looked at her, and then said:

"For the last three weeks I have been flattering myself by imagining you cared for me: now, this evening, two hours ago, I had a rude shock. I am going to ask you a question. *Do* you care for me?"

The girl did not answer. She was pulling the soft white blossoms from the plant at her side; and one by one she flung them on the ground.

The Ugly Boy's elder brother went on:

"I love you—but you know that: and after all, that is not the question. Do you love me?"

The girl flung the last blossom to the ground and then looked steadily up.

"No, I don't," she said.

The Ugly Boy's brother made no reply for a moment, and then he said in a low voice.

"Thank you . . . I wanted to know . . . I'm glad I know before going out to South Africa—we are off, you know, next week."

Something in his tone made the girl begin to cry. The Ugly Boy's brother tugged at his moustache, and then he slipped out of the room.

Next week he left for South Africa. He was sent at once to the front and fought in many a skirmish. He was mentioned in the despatches for bravery and daring, and his people were proud of him.

But it was the Ugly Boy who married the girl after all.

PICTURE PUZZLES.

TOWNS VISITED BY THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK ON THEIR RECENT COLONIAL TOUR.

These pictures represent six towns visited by the Duke and Duchess of York (now the Prince and Princess of Wales) during their recent tour of the British Colonies. We offer three prizes, valued at half-a-guinea, seven-and-sixpence, and five shillings, for the solution of the puzzles. The Editor's decision must be taken as final, and if more than three competitors are correct, the prizes will be given to the first three correct answers opened; this being better than dividing the prizes. Answers should be marked "PICTURE PUZZLES," and must reach us at THE GIRL'S REALM Office, Norfolk Street, London, W.C., on or before February 15th, 1902. In this instance boys may compete as well as girls.

The Children's Own Corner.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

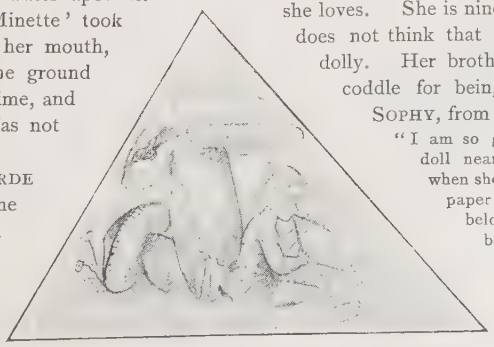
My Dear Little People,—

I wish you had all been at our Bazaar at Mrs. Henry Behrens' house and seen the beautiful dolls and the pretty children who helped to sell. There was one dear little girl in Japanese costume, who simply made everybody buy, she looked so winsome. She carried a little tray on which were displayed Japanese toys, and nobody could say "no" when she came round and asked them to give money for her wares. Then the dolls! There was a stall full of them. In ball dress, in bridal dress, in everyday dress they smiled at you, and you had to purchase them. There was one doll, a schoolboy, with big ears sticking out and such a funny face; he was bought at once by a grown-up person for his droll countenance. Then there were the Dolls of the Empire, a funny Welshwoman with a very big hat, and a cap under it, and near her was a Canadian dressed in a sort of blanket stuff, and a close fur-trimmed cap, and on her little feet were show shoes. There was an Irish dolly with a shawl over her pretty hair, and a number of Scotch dolls in plaid, and Newhaven fishwomen carrying their nets. Then there was an ayah in a close-fitting petticoat, and a Chinese dolly inside a little house, and I must not forget two dear little dollies in tattered clothes who were called "Two Little Vagabonds." I could not tell you of all the other dolls, the ladies with long trains, the nurses with caps, the schoolgirls in hockey costume, with their sticks in their hand. It all went off very pleasantly, and if you want to read more about our Bazaar you must turn to the Chat with the Guild, for now I must attend to my children's letters.

Here is one from a little French girl "Jeanne." She likes The Girl's Realm very much, and "The Children's Corner" most of all. She writes to me about a cat called "Minette," who belongs to quite poor people. "The other night there was a fire, and the little house was all in flames, and the 'sapeurs pompiers' came and they began to throw water upon it. And what do you think? 'Minette' took out her kitten, carrying it in her mouth, and then she put it down on the ground and she went inside a second time, and brought out a second kitten. Was not this wonderful?"

Here is a letter from Hildegarde Graham Evans, from Canada, the land of big forests and of frozen rivers, and of northern lights burning up in the sky.

"We have had our first snowstorm to-day, the 12th of November, which is three days later than last year. I am so glad it has come as it means skating, tobogganing, snow-shoeing, and skeeing, which I think is glorious. I am awfully fond of drawing and painting, and notice most of the girls who write to you are. I wish the 'puzzle page' was not quite so hard! I always try it, but never get them all. Don't you think it would be nice if the girls could send a photo. of themselves with their letters? I would love to know what they look like."



A FAIRY PICTURE.
Drawn by Antoinette Guelliot.

The idea of Mary Locock's lines on Spring is very pretty, but the lines will not scan, and until they can scan I must not publish them.

F. F. Queellet and "Antoinette" have sent me a very kind letter, which I was very glad to get. "Antoinette" has talent and will draw quite nicely when she has practised a little more. I have letters from "Betty," "Adah," "May Barnes," "Una," and "Blanche," telling me of their homes and their pets. "Una" has a tortoise, and she tells me that he is a "great dear." He has gone to sleep in a corner of the conservatory." "Adah" has a parrot "who talks to himself and says in such a voice, 'Go away, you naughty thing,' when anyone he does not like approaches him; and 'How do you do, my pretty dear?' when anyone he likes comes near."

Winifred M. Wilson, who has just joined the Guild, writes to assure me of all that she will do now that she is a member, and then she tells me of her pets:

"We have two pet birds, one is a dove called 'Jenny,' and she is about 18 years old: her cage is hung in the conservatory night and day. The other bird is a little canary called 'Bobs'; we have only had him for about 3 months; he is not a year old, and so he does not sing yet, but he chirrups and trills all day long. He is such a little darling, he is green and yellow. We have a pointer called 'Lady.' I am very fond of painting, and love painting Christmas cards."

I have letters from "Cecilia," who practises an hour and a-half a day, and who is nine years of age and who can play the "Adieu," of Dussek. This is a difficult piece for a little maiden's fingers to render, and for her brain to apprehend, but "Cecilia's" determination to "go on" will have its reward.

"Mary" writes to tell me that she has a doll that she loves. She is nine years and a-half old; she does not think that she is too old to nurse her dolly. Her brother Harry calls her a "molly-coddle for being so fond of dolls," and Sophy, from Tasmania, writes:—

"I am so glad the little girl buried her doll near her dog. I buried my doll when she was broken. I put on a bit of paper over her grave, 'Louisa, the beloved doll of Sophy,' but the wind blew it away."

Poor Mary and Sophy! I remember when I was quite a little girl, no bigger than one of my children, I had, too a

dear doll, named Louisa, and my brother had a wooden horse that had lost one leg. We called him Bucephalus. His mane had grown so thin that it showed the tacks with which it was fastened. Between us we had a black donkey named Gee-ho, a limp sort of animal, with very long ears, and a roly-poly body made of cloth. The games that we played with these toys pass description. Sometimes Louisa was a beautiful princess, and sometimes she was a scullion; but my brother's horse was always a war steed, and the black donkey was anything we made believe he was. Well, one day father said we were to leave our old home in France and come to England. It was a long journey, and we were to leave useless things behind. I am sorry to say that our toys were thought useless things. We did not mind so much saying good-bye to the other toys, but to part from Louisa, Bucephalus, and Gee-ho was terrible to think of. I pictured Louisa thrown upon a dust-heap, and nobody to comfort her or to rescue her. I had often, I must confess, forgotten her for days together, and allowed her to remain sprawling in some neglected corner, but now it seemed to me that my old doll had a heart, and that she would certainly fret when I was gone. There was no doubt Bucephalus, with his three legs, and his ridiculously thin mane, would be treated with contempt. Gee-ho, with his cloth body, was the most respectable-looking of the three, but we were sure he would not like to be parted from his comrades, so Willy and I made up our minds that if we could not take Louisa, Bucephalus, and Gee-ho to England we would not separate them. Willy had a wooden sword, which he called "Excalibur," after King Arthur's great sword, and he determined that although he had permission to take his wooden sword with him to England, he would leave Excalibur with Bucephalus.

PROBABLY SO.

CHRISTMAS KIT: "That young Tabby who told me that I should skate beautifully in walnut shells must have been a practical joker."

How Willy and I buried our toys.

It was the evening before we were to start. Father and mother had gone out to dine with some friends. The servants were busy packing. It was getting time for Willy and I to go to bed, but we stole up to the room where the useless things that were to be left behind were put away in a heap. I took Louisa in my arms, and Willy took Bucephalus and Gee-ho, and gave me Excalibur to carry. Our house was close to a great wood. The French people called it a forest. In that wood was a hollow tree. We had often played about that tree. We called it an enchanted castle. Louisa would be shut up in it, and Gee-ho placed near it. Sometimes we made believe he was a wicked witch guarding her, or a dragon going to eat her up. Then Willy, riding on Bucephalus, and with his wooden sword Excalibur drawn, would come to deliver the beautiful Louisa. I would be the wicked witch or the dragon, and we fought for her. Willy usually won, but after the battle Louisa forgot my unkind conduct towards her, and would go home placidly in my arms. We determined to put our dear toys inside that hollow tree. If they could not come with us to England they would remain in a place where they had spent many delightful hours. So Willy and I stole out; the tree was at some distance in the thick wood, but we knew the way. I can see it still—a gnarled old oak, with great branches stretching out like giant arms, and in its trunk a huge gash. The sun had set, and the sky was like a flat, golden painting behind it, such as you see it in illuminated books. We gathered up some of the golden dead leaves from the ground, and made a bed of them inside the hole in the trunk, and then we put in first Louisa, and then Bucephalus, then Gee-ho, and last of all Excalibur, and when they were all together, we gathered more dead leaves and covered them up. And then we stole away, through the wood, in which the shadows were gathering. My heart was beating, and Willy was silent. I was trying hard not to cry, and I was frightened also. When we reached home the servants had missed us, and were calling. They were very angry with us for the fright we had given them. But we would not say where we had been. And now, with my mind's eye, I can see the old tree, and I wonder if Louisa, Bucephalus, Gee-ho, and Excalibur are still resting inside its hollow trunk, or if some French child, burrowing inside it found the toys the English children had left there.

Good-bye, my dear little people,

Your loving friend,

THE EDITOR.

Chat with the . . . Girl of the Period.

BY THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR GIRLS.—ROSALIND writes to me a letter that I cannotpublish, for it is so long and it is so confidential. The sum of it is that a very taking young American has come to the village, and with her pretty dresses and her pretty ways is revolutionising the place. All the other maidens are thrown into the shade. "She is everything at every party, there seems no girl who can approach her," writes ROSALIND, who is very much aggrieved, and who asks me if I do not think a flirt of that description very much to be blamed? Then "AURIOL" writes to me on the same subject: "What do you think of girl-flirts? There is nothing I loathe so much. Will you talk on this a little in your monthly chat, which I enjoy?"

This is a very large order, and from my correspondents' letters I understand that I am expected to deliver a weighty condemnation of all flirting whatsoever. I am not even to admit degrees in it. I am to say that flirting is, was, and ever shall be unworthy of a self-respecting girl. And now I do not go so far as that. I think there are many shades of difference in this practice, and that not all of them are objectionable. For a girl whose practice of the art or of the crime is simply a kind of theft of wandering affection, a pastime like that of snaring birds, I have no words of condemnation too strong. By this kind of girl I mean the one whose pleasure in flirting is in direct proportion to the pain that she inflicts, and who enjoys the keener satisfaction at the double event when she has brought misery both on her dupes and on her rivals. There are some girls, only a few, I like to think, who never care to win another's affection until it is held by somebody else, and who tire of it as soon as they have won it for themselves. But all this may really be taken as said, because I think that everybody, even the flirt herself in her better moments, would say it without my help. There are, however, other forms of flirting in which it is almost as natural as laughing in the sun. It is, as it were, the playful side of the relations of the sexes. It is so entirely natural that young people of opposite sexes should like to please each other, should take delight in each other's society, should feel stimulated to their best when they meet, should, in fact, as the phrase goes, put their best foot forward. Now in all this, in a way, they are bidding, in a not ignoble fashion, for each other's esteem. This is as it should be. The moment that all of us feel indifferent on that point and seek to please ourselves only, is the moment of our decline. Well, if the interchange of pretty speeches and graceful services, and all the rest of it belonging to this kind of intercourse between young people, is to be called flirting, so much the better for flirting, for there is no harm in it, but on the contrary very much good. There are of course higher and deeper things beyond it, into which we need not enter, and which are so far above it that they almost belong to an entirely different category. Flirting may be no more than the artist, that is in all of us, in a state of playfulness. The artist-nature is at times in this mood in every art. The painter is not always at work on great and purposeful pictures. He is sometimes idly sketching, letting the pencil guide the hand, not the hand the pencil. The musician takes his imaginative recreation in much the same way, and the keys speak to him and impose their will upon him quite as often as he speaks to the keys. A thousand situations, scenes, characters flit through the mind of the writer, for every one that takes shape in a definite creation. Now why should it not be the same thing in the intercourse of young people? They naturally seek to please many before they can finally determine that there is one only whom they care to please, or be pleased by. The stage in which they meet and present themselves at their best to one another is the beginning of things, and it is not too hastily to be called flirting, on the principle of giving a dog a bad name.

Is ROSALIND quite sure that she has not suffered a wound inflicted in this way—inflicted, perhaps, wholly without intent, and not likely to have any serious consequence to her if she keeps her presence of mind? The

young American comes from a land where the intercourse of the youth of both sexes is altogether freer, more open, more natural. In this, or even in the other supposition of a wound deliberately inflicted in order to enjoy the sport of her pain, she must not give way to needless alarm. If one in whom she is interested has shown pleasure in another's society, and in the little nothings of daily life, nothing very serious will come of it. If he has shown a deeper feeling after having made her believe that feeling was all for her, why then she can but echo honest Dogberry in thanking heaven that she is rid of a knave. It will be all for the best if nothing comes of it, and in the latter and harder case, as the Americans say, for the "best best." Yes, it is a thousand times better to lose a friend when the loss may be borne than to have to lose him at a later stage when it might be a mortal blow.

GITANA writes from Paris:—"I wish I could tell you how much I admire what you say of the spirit of domesticity. I hope you will not mind when I suggest that on the Continent girls go in a great deal more for housework than do English girls. I am almost sure that here nearly every girl knows something about cooking and sewing, and takes an interest in it too." Then she goes on to say "that in Sweden each schoolgirl takes it in turn daily to go marketing, and on coming back the head mistress examines her purchases and makes what remarks she may think necessary on them. The one who has made the nicest dinners at least cost is rewarded. In Austria, no girl is considered completely educated unless she has knowledge of cooking and housekeeping." What GITANA says is quite true. I, however, think that the Swedish system would not apply to our school system. The time for learning household management is when school is over, either from one's own mother, or in a special school started to give that sort of education.

And now to return to my girls' problems.

"IN DOUBT" writes:—

"I have seen a verse about a friend not being true who flatters, and should like your advice. Is it wrong to show my admiration for my friend, who is two years older than I am?"

Has not "IN DOUBT" confused two attitudes of mind, that of flattery and of admiration, which are really quite different. Flattery we should never give, for it more or less savours of humbug. It is wrong to flatter, but it is wholly right to express your admiration for your friend when it is genuine.

"LEONORA," sends me the following conduct problem:—"Three girls belong to a hockey club—Jenny, Nelly, and Lottie. Jenny and Nelly were great chums until Lottie came. The latter tried to lure Nelly away, but she resisted; then Lottie tried her wiles upon Jenny, with whom she was more successful, and poor Nelly had the mortification of seeing Jenny constantly with Lottie. She felt this bitterly, and avoided her old chum whenever the latter tried to seek her out. A coldness has sprung up between them, over which Jenny frets, for although she accepted Lottie's invitation to be friends, her real love has always been for Nelly." LEONORA asks me what Jenny ought to do under the circumstances? She ought to go to Nelly and say to her exactly what LEONORA has said to me. If Nelly still refuses to extend the hand of friendship after this frank confession, then I think that her friendship is scarce worth having. But I do not think she will refuse it. Both "IN DOUBT" and "Jenny" seem to have got away from Nature, and by doing so have got into a coil. Let them return to her; let them do the simple thing. Both difficulties would be met by simplicity.

"IMMORTELLE" asks:—

A. had formed a friendship with B., who, from time to time, promised A. numberless little gifts, which all failed to arrive. This forgetfulness (?) was forgiven her. Then B. wanted to buy something of A., and the article was sent, but from that time A. has received no word.

Letters of inquiry were sent, and A. has every reason to believe the article reached her.

Should A., seeing that B. appears willing her silence should be misinterpreted, believe in her, and go on trusting her still?

If Annie is quite sure that the letter of inquiry duly reached Beatrice, it certainly looks odd that Beatrice does not think it worth her while to reply, but of course she must be quite sure of that. In such a case a very close intimacy would almost die a natural death; but if Annie, in spite of herself, feels that she wants to go on liking Beatrice, and, so to speak, gives her the benefit of the doubt, why, by all means let her do so. We never can go very far wrong in being slow to think evil. Half the troubles of the world, as between friend and friend, come from over-haste in thinking evil. Suppose, for instance, that Beatrice had for the moment promised more than she could perform, she might feel ashamed to say so, and that might be the real reason of her silence; and yet she might be only waiting for the opportunity to keep her word. There is so much in and out work in all questions of motive, and we are constantly being surprised by explanations when we thought there was absolutely no explanation to give.

"TURPS" asks:—

A company was started with the object of improving mankind. The Committee are very anxious to do the work of the society, and are willing to give pecuniary help towards training volunteers, who in return must undertake to work heartily in its service for a certain number of years. X. wants above all things to obtain that training, but is unable to afford it without help. She is willing to agree to the company's conditions, and would work faithfully for them, but at the same time, while fully realising how entirely unselfish are their motives, and how much good they have already done in different parts of the world, X. is not convinced that the beliefs they hold and wish to spread are true. Would it be wrong for X. to offer herself for the work, as it would certainly give her the opportunity of leading a much more useful life than she otherwise could do?

There can be no sort of doubt that if X. begins by deceiving her employers she will be making a bad beginning to the improvement of mankind by first deteriorating herself. For our part we never heard of such a company as the one she mentions, and we should advise her to enquire very fully about it.

I have many problems still before me, to which I will return. Next time I will adjudge the prize.

Your affectionate friend,

THE EDITOR.

"SWEET SEVENTEEN."

From a photograph by LAFAYETTE, LTD.

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE FOURTH.

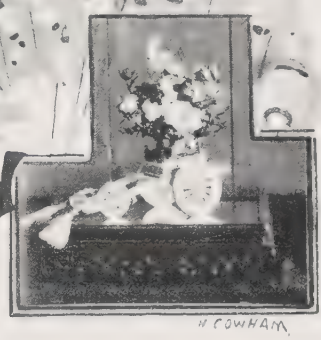
THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.

"From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair."

—*See Editor's note on page* 415.

A Festival of Dolls in Japan

A DANCER AND HER ACCOMPANIST.



THE FLOWER WHEEL.

Of exquisite workmanship—carved ivory, crowned by a posy of silken peonies and rosebuds.

BY YEI T. OZAKI.

Illustrated by special Photographs.

In Japan, as in all Eastern countries, the girls have but a secondary place in the family; but there is one day in the whole of the Japanese calendar which is exclusively devoted to them, and which must, to some extent, compensate them for the want of consideration shown them the other three hundred and sixty-four days of the year.

The Festival of the *O Hina*, or Dolls, or more properly the Festival of the Little People, falls on the third day of the third month, and on this day the girls of Japan with their dolls reign supreme throughout the land.

In all households, high and low, rich and poor, that are blessed with daughters, preparations are made towards the end of February for the approaching Feast. The iron doors of brick and stone *godowns* (warehouses), where all the family valuables are kept safe from fire (the so-called *flower* of Tokio), are thrown open, and large boxes full of innumerable dolls and the furniture and appurtenances belonging to their miniature establishments are unpacked and set out in a room specially prepared for them.

Special rice, baked with beans and sugar, certain cakes and a kind of thick white and very sweet wine, only drunk by the girls and their friends at this season, have all to be prepared and set out before the dolls. The girls are supposed to cook the food themselves, and then dressed in their best crape *mon-tsuki* (ceremonial dress bearing the crest of the family to which they belong in the middle of the back and sleeves) to receive their friends and relations, and enjoy all the good things of the Festival in company with the dolls.

Downstairs in the temple where I dwell, two

or three days before the great day, I notice that the priest's little daughter, O Kiyo, has not been behindhand, and has unpacked her small show of dolls, and set them out in one corner of the family room with dishes of cakes and tiny jars of white wine and vases of flowers, all wearing a festive appearance. Evidently she has not been able to buy any of the elaborate and expensive dolls which represent the Emperor and Empress, for a picture (kakemono) with two raised figures in Imperial costume hangs at the head of her small show of dolls, and she tells me that this "kakemono" does duty for the Emperor and Empress.

In 1901, the 3rd of March fell on a fine day fortunately, as I had planned in the morning to take photographs, first of the famous Doll Fair held at Nihonbashi, and then of a show of dolls in a friend's house during the afternoon.

On awaking, after my servant had pushed back the wooden shutters, the first thing I did was to slide back the *shoji* (paper screens) and look at the weather. My heart jumped with joy, for the sun was shining brightly on my beautiful plum-tree, blooming alone in its glory in my temple garden—and even as I peeped out on this blushing radiance below, a nightingale sang "hokké-kyo-hokké-kyo" (the Japanese nightingale's note), and it seemed as if I heard all the girls of Tokio sliding back the *shoji* of their rooms, and rejoice, as I did, at the beautiful morning and the prospect of a bright and happy Festival.

In an hour or so I passed under the flower-wreathed plum-tree on one side and the big strong pine on the other, under the roofed gateway, and out to the busiest thoroughfare of Tokio.

The photographer and I walked up and down *Jikkendana* (the name of the street, literally meaning "ten houses," because the Fair used to boast ten shops, now reduced to eight), trying to decide which shops would yield the most effective photographs. The jingle of the tram bells and the crowds of passers-by, never too busy to collect round any unusual proceeding, greatly impeded a speedy decision. Then the shops were all low and dark, and receded somewhat from the road.

I entered several of these stores and the sight which met my gaze fairly bewildered me. Row upon row, from the mats to the ceiling, ranged round the three sides of the room, rose the tiny images of Emperors and Empresses, maids of honour, court musicians, guards of honour, archers fully equipped, lords and ladies gay of good or famous memory, all most beautifully dressed in crape and brocade, the scarlet and gold of their costumes wooing the sunbeams to light upon them and redeem them from their obscurity. It was a realm of dolls such as a fairy's wand might raise in dreams, and only Hans Andersen adequately describe.

Each group of dolls, whether of a royal couple or a maid of honour trio, or a set of five musicians, sat or stood in state in a box of white wood.

One of our photographs gives a good idea of one of the shops in the *Jikkendana*.

There are two kinds of shops, the first where only the dolls are sold, the second where all kinds of miniature household furniture and utensils may be bought for the doll's establishments.

The tiny "tansu" (chest of drawers), the trays, bowls, "hibachi" (charcoal braziers), and bridal furniture are easily discernible, all fashioned exquisitely in black lacquer, the fastenings and handles and decorative patterns in some bright metal that looked like gold. Like the dolls, each little article is laid in its own white box.

According to one of the local papers a royal couple may be bought from five shillings to half-a-guinea, a set of three maids of honour from three to ten shillings, a couple of guards of honour from half-a-crown to ten shillings, a set of musicians from four shillings and sixpence to half-a-guinea, and so on. A complete set with all the dolls and their miniature "establishment" would cost from three to four hundred yen (£30 or £40). This is merely a rough estimate of what a modern set bought in the market would now cost. The toys which are handed down in old and noble families are simply invaluable heirlooms.

According to a Japanese newspaper there are at present only three large manufactories of *Hina* in Tokio. The dollmakers number

about nineteen, with twelve others who make the dolls' furniture, tables, trays, etc., etc. In 1898 this fanciful industry realised about 30,000 yen in Tokio, of which it is said two-thirds of the dolls came from the country. Last year's sale was estimated at something like 40,000 yen (a yen is about two shillings in English currency).

The dolls are not saleable all the year round, that is to say the Festival dolls, etc. (ordinary dolls, of course, can be bought any day in the common toy shops); they are merchandise for the day only, and the Fair is only opened from about the middle of February to the third of March, so that people who have the time or the taste for haggling may often get good bargains.

It is the custom for parents to celebrate the Festival by buying something to add to their little girls' show of dolls, and as I went in and out of shops in the temporary Fair I saw several purchasers. Sometimes it was a poor mother who hurried in and bought a solitary doll; another time it was a middle-class man who bought two or three sets of handsome images; and so on, the usual human kaleidoscope of all sorts and conditions of people.

Well-to-do families have their daughters' "O Hina" made in Kyoto, where the Festival is celebrated on a larger and much more lavish scale than in Tokio.

In our photograph of the doll shop, the shopmen may be seen sitting over their "hibachi," warming their cold hands at tiny charcoal fires, waiting for customers. When these come their sombre faces will grow bright with smiles and alert with assiduity to please the visitor and to sell their wares.

In the afternoon I was invited to one of my friend's houses to see her O Hina Sama show. Many were the speeches made by my little hostess and her mother, telling me that the show was not worth looking at, and that if I looked forward to seeing anything pretty, I should be disappointed.

This preliminary depreciation was in accordance with Japanese etiquette, which, with an exaggerated humility, compels people to call

A DOLL SHOP, WHERE THE DOLLS THAT FIGURE IN THE FESTIVAL OF "THE HONOURABLE LITTLE PEOPLE" ARE BOUGHT.

The shopmen may be seen warming their cold hands at tiny charcoal fires, waiting for customers.

everything "ugly," or "stupid," "small," "old," or "dirty," that is their own. At last I had answered all these remarks and was then led into the room where all the "little people" were set out in state.

It is difficult to find words to tell you all I saw, so many, so beautiful were the dolls, so gorgeous were their robes, and so dainty all their furniture and belongings. If "purple and fine linen" conveys the idea of the acme of luxury I must use it, and the O Hina Sama (Honourable Little People) were certainly faring sumptuously, for a whole feast was spread before them, served on dainty lacquer trays.

THE THREE DOLL-CARETAKERS OF THE MINIATURE PALACE GROUNDS JOVIALLY KEEPING THEIR NIGHTLY VIGIL.

They have lighted a fire and are cooking good soup in a pot which hangs gipsy-fashion over the flames.

It was a glimpse of old Japan, and more particularly of its secluded Court in the costume of a day long past, and in the setting of the rigorous pomp and formality that prevailed at the time.

The daïs on which the dolls, etc., were placed, ran the whole length of the room, and was divided into two distinct divisions. On the left the Emperor and Empress set out in state on four tiers or steps of the table, as seen in the photograph.

On the right the *Shishinden* or palace, a miniature building in white wood and shining lacquer and brass, with its artificial cherry-trees and "hana-guruma" (flower-wheels) beneath it, on two shelves.

Let us take the photograph of the daïs with the dolls set out on it, and describe the shelves and their pretty burdens more minutely. On the first tier under a purple canopy sit the royal couple, the Empress's crown is placed between them. Both sit on raised mats arrayed in gorgeous brocades. The Empress holds an open fan in her tiny hands, long cords and tiny tassels seem to be a distinguishing feature of her dress. Her black hair is dressed so as to form a dark and glossy nimbus round her pale and delicately-moulded face. It will be noticed that she has no eyebrows. These have been shaved off and two black marks painted higher up. These marks may often be seen in old Japanese pictures, and are a sign that the wearers belong to the Imperial Court.

On the second tier, just underneath the royal couple, may be seen three maids of honour in the centre, vases of flowers, and a wine bottle covered with neatly-folded paper tied with red string, and by the side of each wine bottle a "creeping doll," that is, a doll made in the act of crawling. The maids of honour are the chief attraction on this shelf. I had them photographed separately so that my readers may have a fair idea of how beautifully these dolls are made and dressed. Their upper "kimono," with the long sleeves, are made of white brocade, while the "hakama" (divided skirt), falling in graceful folds is of scarlet crape; the *crinkle* of which may be clearly seen in the picture. They are supposed to be in the act of waiting on their majesties above.

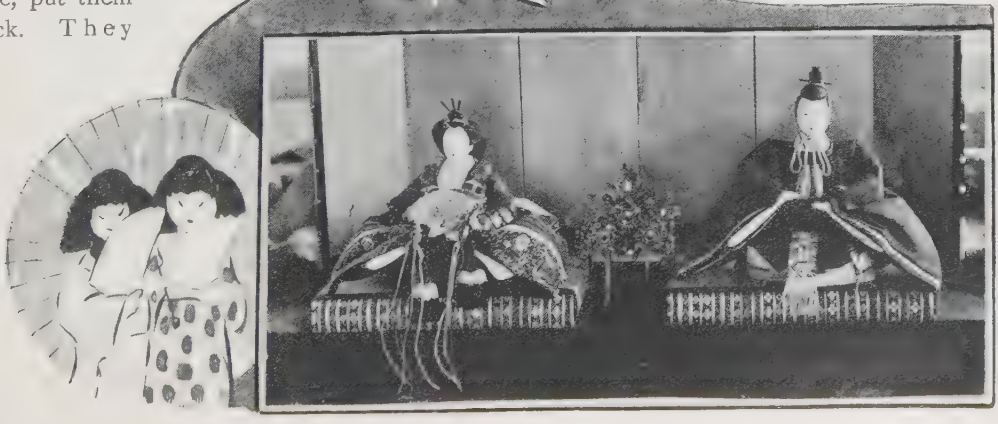
The queer little couple standing between

THE IMPERIAL PALACE, AS REPRESENTED IN THE FAMOUS FESTIVAL.

In the foreground is a family of fluffy and stiff little dogs. Also three little maids, spread out before whom are many delectable cakes.

these ladies-in-waiting on the shelf, are made after the fashion of the dolls in ancient times, when the ceremony was much simpler than it is now. My friend's brother, thinking that they spoilt the appearance of the rest, took them off the shelf with a long stick previous to being photographed, but his mother, explaining that no show could be complete without the quaint little man and wife, put them back. They belong to the *Amakadu* class of doll, mentioned later.

On the third shelf from the top stand the guard of honour, the *Sadaijin* or Minister of the Left, and the *Udaijin* or Minister of the Right, one at each end of the shelf. The Sadaijin, or Minister of the Left, is represented as an old man, with the white hair and beard synonymous with wisdom, because it is supposed to be more difficult to



THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN IN MINIATURE.

THE DOLL-BRIDE'S TRUNK AND CHESTS OF DRAWERS.

The largest box holds wedding presents and household utensils, the smaller box and chest of drawers, the rare knick-knacks.

defend the Emperor from enemies on the left than on the right. The Udaijin, Minister of the Right, is represented as a young man in scarlet. Both the guards of honour carry their bows and their quivers full of arrows on their backs. These are quite large and stand high above their heads. Between these two protectors of the Imperial person are ranged the five court musicians, each in the act of performing on his instrument, either a flute or drum. The two on the spectator's left are in scarlet crape and green brocade, the other three entirely in emerald hue.

THE MINIATURE FOOD TRAYS, RICE BOWLS, AND JAPANESE TEA POT EMPLOYED BY THE DOLL-BRIDE.

A MINIATURE DOLL'S SET USED IN THE GREAT FESTIVAL.

The stand is the large one for serving the bride's banquet, the wooden accessories, its cover, the largest basin and cup. The gold lacquered tray, the knife, the two bowls with cover and cup.

On the fourth tier we find an artificial orange tree on the right of the royal couple, and a small cherry tree on the left. I asked the reason of the orange and the cherry trees, and was told that in ancient times there was always planted an orange tree on the right and a cherry tree on the left of the Imperial Palace at Kyoto. On the inner side of each tree there is a little stand of specially prepared rice and beans, then will be seen two little figures, one dressed sumptuously in brocade befitting his high rank, for he is a nobleman;

he carries an open fan; the other more simply robed, with an open umbrella. He is a half-witted jester. These two, so the story goes, were retainers in the service of a Daimio (a Japanese earl), and by his command the jester became the attendant of the nobleman. The latter one day told the "fool" to go and buy a fan. He obediently started out to do his master's bidding, but on the way he forgot what his errand was. All he could remember was that he had to buy something that would open and shut. The only thing he could think of at the moment that fulfilled these requirements was an umbrella. So he bought one and carried it back.

The master was wroth when he saw that the jester had returned with an umbrella, and taking his own fan from his belt and clicking it open, he said:

"How could you make such a mistake, fool? Does not a fan shut up tight so that you can slip it into your girdle and open it—so!"

"Yes, my lord," said the jester, suiting the action to his superior's word, "and so does my umbrella—thus!"

And he opened the umbrella full in his master's face.

The irate lord could say no more for laughter, and in this way the poor fool out witted the wise man.

Another photograph illustrates this amusing anecdote, which is often the subject of a farce between the two serious scenes of a "No" dance on the Japanese stage.

On the other side by the cherry tree are two lady dolls in lovely crape "kimono." They are represented as messengers in the act of carrying letters. The central doll, a queer little figure, was bought at Asakusa in Tokio, famous for its toys. It has no particular history except that my senior hostess had brought it back with her from one afternoon's outing as a little present for her daughter.

On the fifth or lowest tier we find all the doll's furniture, articles for toilet use and a

A GLIMPSE OF OLD JAPAN, AND OF ITS SECLUDED COURT IN THE COSTUME OF A DAI DONG JAT.

On the first tier sit the Emperor and Empress, the royal crown between them. On the tiers below are the Maid [illegible] the "creeping dolls," the guard of honour. On the lowest tier is the dolls' furniture

number of miniature trays set out with dishes of food, just as if the dolls were alive and in need of meals. These were all so exquisitely fashioned that I photographed the different sets. One photograph is a picture of a lady's miniature toilet set. There stands the large rack for airing her "kimono," and then the eye immediately sees its small replica for her towel. The metal mirror in its case is conspicuous on its stand, and the lacquer basin and jug stand next. The cabinet is the lady-doll's writing table, the long narrow box is for tooth brush and powder, and the high bowl used to serve for the blacking of teeth when that was in vogue. This was a custom of antiquity, still practised in remote parts of the country, by which women were obliged to disfigure themselves after marriage, so as to make themselves unattractive to other men.

Here we have a doll-bride's trunks and chest of drawers. The largest box is used for her wadded quilts and household utensils, and the two smaller boxes and the chest of drawers hold her folded "kimono." All these toys are beautifully made in lacquer, the corners are clamped with some untarnishable metal, and the two crests (one a quatre-foil and the other three bars in a circle) of the family to which my little friend belongs, stand out in bold relief on the black lacquer background.

Here is a picture of one of the "O zen" or food trays (taken from the shelf), with its soup, rice, and vegetable bowls. On a stand next to it is the large rice-bowl from which the waitress fills each individual bowl as it is passed to her. Next to the rice-bowl is the teapot, also on a stand. It is the Japanese custom—for ladies especially, as they are not supposed to drink wine—to finish up a meal with tea.

On referring to the photograph of dolls on the daïs, there will be seen three men's heads appearing above the food trays on the lowest shelf. They are the three caretakers of the miniature palace grounds, and it is their duty to watch while others sleep. No easy matter! In another photograph the caretakers are keeping their nightly vigil, and they are doing it right jovially. It is midnight, and they have lighted a fire and are cooking some good soup in a pot which hangs gipsy fashion over the flames. They have had recourse to the *saké* bottle, and the three effects of alcohol are supposed to be depicted on their tiny countenances.

The one facing us, with Mephistophelian eyebrows and the corners of his mouth set in a saturnine grin, is angry, and if we could only hear him, is pouring out naughty epithets on his two companions. This overcomes the one on his left (our right), whose state is *vin triste*, and he wipes away a tear, perhaps two, over the beam that is in his brother's eye, quite forgetting the one in his own. The third fellow on our left is quite jovial, a boon companion, in fact; he holds the wine bottle, and in spite of the tears of one and the growls of the other of his friends, is pressing them to take more.

Looking at the photograph of the Imperial Palace, again we see that the lower shelf is in reality meant to be a garden with its trees and flowers.

My little friend's mother pointed out the artificial cherry tree on the right. It is an exact copy of the tree in the famous Gion Park in Kyoto. There are two "hana-guruma" (lit. "flower-wheels"), the larger one a black basket brimming over with cherry blossoms and peonies on a little two-wheeled cart drawn by a little doll who looks like a flower herself.

The smaller "flower-wheel" is an exquisite piece of workmanship (the photograph appears in the headpiece of this article) of carved ivory, crowned by a posy of silken peonies and rosebuds.

In the foreground of the Palace photograph there is a family of divers fluffy and stiff little dogs, preparing to take their walks abroad, besides a very modern-looking couple, the man with bowler hat and walking stick, and his gentle spouse quite *à la Japonaise*. Not far away on the left there are three pretty message bearers, one with a letter-box, the others carrying branches of flowers. Again, in front of the three little maids, perhaps to tempt them to their journey's end, are spread out many kinds of delectable cakes. There is the ever-present *mochi* on white trays adorned with

chrysanthemums, besides many other sugared dainties on lacquer stands and in boxes.

My young friend and her brother quite entered into the spirit of the journalist's afternoon. It was a great business getting all the different "O Hina" and the sets of doll furniture down from the shelves and carrying them backwards and forwards to the photographer. We both let the brother do all the climbing for us. The shelves creaked in an alarming way as he mounted them, but at last all were photographed and replaced on the shelves without a mishap.

MAIDS OF HONOUR.

At right angles to the principal show stood a smaller one—a group of twelve singing-girls, six dancers in front and six musicians behind. Of the dancers some are posturing, and others swaying gently to and fro to the measure of the music, just as the branches of the orange and the cherry trees they bear aloft in their hands sway in the breeze. Their crape "kimono" and brocade "obi" (large sashes) are of humming bird hues; their hair is

THE EARL, THE JESTER, AND THE UMBRELLA.

An amusing anecdote introduced into the Festival.

THE CHERRY DANCERS.

A doll representation of the famous dancers who are only to be seen in Kyoto when the cherry is in season.

elaborately dressed and crowned with flowers. The extreme length of the sleeves denotes the extreme youth of the wearers, and their willowy forms and pale oval faces represent the ideal of Japanese female beauty.

The dolls before me are, so my friend tells me, a small representation of the famous cherry dancers only to be seen in Kyoto in the month of April, when the flower after which they are named, and in whose honour they dance, is in season.

Here is a dancer and one of the musicians —a drummer-girl, taken from the ranks of the cherry dance, so that my readers may see for themselves the graceful poise and exquisite finish of the dolls.

* * * * *

I have here described the Doll Festival as I saw it in the house of a good *samurai* family. It is, however, celebrated on a much grander scale in the houses of the nobility, where the dolls and their households are costly heir-looms, on which skilful artisans have lavished their skill from one generation to another.

The ceremony of the *Hina Festival* may be considered one of the many interesting customs connected with Japanese life, and there is in this time-honoured festival much more than at first meets the eye.

Like many another Japanese custom, the festival is supposed to have come over from China, and in ancient times it was called by several different names, such as Guan San (the First Three), Diu San (Doubled Three), and *Tokuasetsu*, or Festival of the Peach Blossom, because the festival fell at the season of the flowering of the peach. More popularly it was named in the colloquial language *Momo-no-sekku*, which means the same as Tokuasetsu.

The more classical name was *Ziomi* or "*First Serpent.*" The name *Ziomi* was derived from China. According to the ancient Chinese calendar, the third month of the year was the month of the Dragon by the constellation of "*Yoto*," and in China a dragon is supposed to be an evolved serpent. We learn from old Chinese poems that in some of the provinces of China men and women were in the habit of meeting by the side of a river on the first day of the month of the Serpent (that is the first of March), and went through certain ceremonies for the purpose of driving out devils and evil influences with which they supposed themselves to be possessed. During the dynasties of Gi and Shin the 1st of March was changed to the 3rd of March, and the day was still called *Ziomi*. Later on paper dolls, called *Hina*, were used as a kind of scapegoat for this rite, the sins or evil influences were formally put upon the dolls, which were then thrown into the river, and the people celebrated their new lease of life by drinking a kind of wine, and eating cakes made of certain herbs, both of which were supposed by Chinese superstition to bring happiness and long life to the consumers.

Another ceremony, called *Kiyoku-Sui-no-Yen* (lit., entertainment at the bend of a river), cock-fighting and the offering of lamp-lights to the Pole Star, also took place on this day.

It is described in the *Nihongi* (a very old Japanese history) that the Emperor Kenso (1,500 years ago) performed the ceremony of *Kiyoku-Sui-no-Yen*, and that of the exorcism of devils, at his Palace in Kyoto.

Out of these several ancient ceremonies of religious signification the present so-called Doll Festival has emerged, and has been traced back as prevailing since the second year of the reign of the Emperor Bidatsu, A.D. 572.

In the days of the Shogunate it was the custom for the Daimo (lords) to observe the holiday by paying a visit to the Shogun (military ruler) to offer their felicitations at the hour of the Serpent (10 a.m.), and in every household, without distinction of rank, the *Hina Matsuri* was kept throughout the land.

A TALE OF ST. VALENTINE'S EVE.

By BELLA SIDNEY WOOLF.

Illustrated by MALCOLM PATTERSON.

AT last the great day had come. I could hardly believe it, when I sat up in bed and brushed my hair out of my eyes. In books, I notice, the heroine always springs out of bed, and is as "fresh as paint," in the early morning; but that's only in books. Hyacinth and I are country girls, but we don't feel like that. We blink like owls for quite five minutes before we get up. Well, on this particular morning it was so fine that it did not need a "frosty morning courage" to jump out of bed and pull up the blind. It was the very fairest of fair February mornings—all trees a-bud and some a-blossom—all birds chanting their gayest—and the limpid, golden sunlight over all things. I had often looked out on the same sight, but it had never appeared to me as it did that morning, the morning of my first ball. Yes, in twelve hours' time I should be on the threshold of that wonderland into which I had hardly dreamt of peeping three months ago. I threw open the window, and the fresh spring air came in with a rush of sap and earth scent; the pink almond blossoms tapped at the window panes, and I laughed aloud for very happiness.

This was how it happened. You see, since we had to leave The Towers, four years ago, we haven't seen much of our dear Aunt Pamela. Jay—he's my brother, and he doesn't mince matters—says "when Poverty flies in at the door, dear Aunt Pamela flies out at the window—or would fly, only she's an unlikely bird." It's dreadfully rude of Jay, but he is so funny when he says things like that.

Now, father is a dear, but he is dreadfully clever and unpractical; a great Greek scholar, and always buried in musty, fusty old books. It's a great pity when a man is all Greek, for this is what occurred. Someone whom he trusted to manage his affairs cheated him, and ran off with nearly all our money, and we only discovered it four years ago. We lived at The Towers till then—the very loveliest place in the world, which had belonged to us for hundreds and hundreds of years—and we had to leave it. It nearly broke our hearts. I can't write of it now, without feeling my throat quite tight and horrid. No one, not even Hyacinth, feels as I do about it, I believe; not even Jay, he was too young when it happened; not even father, for he has his Greek. Sometimes, when the pain grows too bad—the longing for the old home and the garden, and the park, and every stone I loved so dearly—when the pain grows too bad, I go to Pemberty, dear old Pemberty, who was father's nurse before she was ours, and cry on her comfortable shoulder till I feel better. Pemberty can't be expected to feel as I do, but she is more "understanding" than some people, and she thinks, as I do, that to be a Penrose of The Towers is a splendid thing. That's what draws me a little to Aunt Pamela. She's father's sister, you know, and very proud of being a Penrose. I think she really felt grieved and hurt when The Towers had to be let, and I know she was very angry with dear old father, which I should not have allowed had I been older, for he can't help being fonder of Greek than of The Towers. Besides, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that

it was not merely affection for her old home which made Aunt Pamela practically ignore us for nearly four years, but also a morbid fear of poor relations. When she discovered that we neither begged nor borrowed nor stole, to quote Jay, she turned the light of her countenance towards us again. We live in splendid exile. The only people who come to see father are professors and wise men, and they talk and talk, and take down books, and rumple their hair, and forget to come in to meals. When we go and call father to dinner on ordinary days, he always looks up and says: "Yes," or "Yes, my dear, quite so," and goes on writing. But he's the best father in the world, for all that, and sometimes I think if our dear mother had lived things would have been different, and he would have thought more about her, and less about Greek. Pemberty says he has never been the same since—poor father!

It certainly is a bit dull; but it's very cheap, and we don't find the time long as a rule. Still, it was delightful when one day in October—just the kind of day when nothing happens—Aunt Pamela drove up in her coach and two, and threw us all into a panic, especially Pemberty and me, for there was nothing but the remains of a leg of mutton (a funeral baked meat, Jay calls it) and a fragment of apple tart. However, all was well in the end. After the first excitement had subsided, and father had been routed out of the library, and Aunt had criticised us all, and made some very uncomfortable remarks, which is her nature to, things grew better, and we began to enjoy ourselves. Pemberty, whose hand has not lost its cunning yet, served up rissoles and pancakes fit for a king, and Aunt Pamela, who is supposed to have an invalidish appetite, "walked into them with surprising vigour," to quote Jay.

It was really very nice to see her. She was staying from Saturday to Monday in "this Godforsaken neighbourhood of yours," she explained, and had suddenly taken it into her head to drive over and see us. Then she turned to father, after looking hard at me for a minute.

"James," she said, "when is your girl with the heathenish name coming out?"

You see, our names are peculiar, owing to father being so Greek. I'm Lalage, and Jay is Jason; only no one thinks of calling him so.

Father looked surprised, not to say bewildered, at aunt's question.

"I beg your pardon, my dear Pamela. Coming out? I do not follow you. What does it mean?" he asked, mildly, looking at aunt over his spectacles.

"James, James; you've been so long out of the world, I declare you are as out of date as a Greek play. I mean, when is she going into society?"

"Never, I'm afraid. It is impossible, under the circumstances. We have no society here," said father, helplessly.

My heart began to beat. I saw the drift of the conversation.

"Nonsense," said Aunt Pamela, in her quick, decided way. "She must and shall come out. I shall give a dance for her; she shall come and stay with me. I'll send for a decent frock and take her about."

That was how it was settled. Aunt Pamela has her drawbacks, but she has also her good points. I certainly felt nothing but affection for her on the day when I was to start by the two o'clock train for London, and my first ball.

The bustle of getting off was delightful. There was my box to be packed. Pemberty did that, and Hyacinth and I hindered. It was a thrilling moment when *the* dress was disposed on the tray. I had dreadful qualms as to what Aunt Pamela would say of it. To me it was a dream, but Aunt Pamela's clothes have a way of making everything one wears look hopelessly dowdy. *The* dress was Aunt Pamela's present. She was very distressed that I couldn't come up to town and have it made, but I did not want to leave father longer than necessary; so I had *carte blanche* to order the very best from Dalchester, our nearest town. It was a proud moment when I walked up Miss Pillbury's steps and rang the bell. Miss Pillbury is *the* dressmaker, patronised by "the County" when it wants something in a hurry.

"Good old aunt," Jay said, when he heard it; "you've got your heart in the right place, after all."

Certainly Miss Pillbury had surpassed her-

self, to my idea. I had spent two sleepless nights in endeavouring to decide between silk and satin, and then—then Providence intervened. It fell out that my best friend from my school days was inspired to send me a ladies' fashion paper, and I read therein of a chiffon frock. Such a thing, I knew, had been undreamt of in Dalchester, but I took the first train in, and sprang the idea on Miss Pillbury. The "daringness" of it made all her little pepper-and-salt curls quiver, and at first she decidedly negatived it. It went against her grain, as Pemberty would have said, to depart from the solid traditions of silk or satin; but at last I prevailed; and, regardless of expense, a chiffon frock was achieved, on the lines of a garment worn by a beauteous ancestress of mine, Priscilla Penrose. With this, and mother's pearls, though not beauteous, and only passable-looking, according to my glass and Jay, I hoped I should not disgrace Aunt Pamela.

At last the moment of departure came. Father, Hyacinth, Jay, and I, lumbered to the station in the tumble-down old cab, I was ensconced in the train, the whistle sounded, the dear trio on the station waved frantically, and we puffed away to London town. I leaned back as comfortably as the third-class carriage allowed, and gave myself up to the delight of the journey. Only people who travel seldom, and live in the wilds, and have to "economise," can understand my feelings. I enjoyed every inch of the budding landscape — every quivering blade of grass — enjoyed it still more when dusk crept on, and the lights twinkled out, and everything seemed full of promise of enjoyment to come.

There was only one blot on the journey, and that was when I saw The Towers. I tried to forget that I should pass the dear old home, tried to absorb myself in a paper as we neared the familiar station; but it was no good. I could not resist looking, and I hung out of the window till the last glimpse was gone. It wasn't only the rush of air that made my eyes red. Oh! dear old home! I should have cried wildly if I had been alone, but there were several people in the carriage; so I just pressed my hands tight, and bit my lip till it bled. Then I fell to wondering about the people who lived there now, and whom I hated so bitterly and unreasonably. They were two harmless old people, I knew, called Smallwood, rich

"I FOUND MYSELF LOOKING INTO THE NICEST FACE I HAD YET SEEN."—(*p.* 389.)

cotton manufacturers, who had bought it for their nephew. That was all I knew, or cared to know, of them. The thought of them perturbed me so much that I forced myself to think of other things.

Glimpses of half-lit stations, some busy, others deserted, bookstalls, signal-boxes, tracts of open country, clustering cottages—all flew by, and seemed to rouse a joyous feeling of anticipation, which filled me more and more as we neared London.

Victoria at last. Aunt's footman, in his long fawn coat, touching his hat, and removing my goods and chattels like an automaton. Then a swift drive in Aunt Pamela's dear little "cab," as she calls it, with the unfamiliar rush and roar of London, the glitter and glare, the throbbing life all around one—oh! the feeling of it! I don't remember what I thought on that drive, my mind was a delicious turmoil of expectation and excitement, and it seemed scarcely a moment since I left the station when we drew up before aunt's door. Good! The awning was up already, and there were glimpses of flowers in the hall. Aunt was awaiting me in a "dream" of a green tea-gown; the drawing-room was half-lit, and the firelight danced on the silver, and there was a fragrance of tea-cake.

"Always an eye to the wittles," Jay would say. He has a way, that most brothers have, I believe, of making one appear unromantic.

"Glad to see you, child," said aunt, bestowing one of her pecks on me. Aunt Pamela is not an adept in the kissing art. "Sit down and have some tea. I'm sorry I couldn't meet you, but I had a note from the Duchess of Foxshire to say she was going South, and had no other day to wish me good-bye, so I was forced to stay in."

A duchess is always honey in the honeycomb to Aunt Pamela, and I rejoiced exceedingly, for I thus escaped her "forked tongue," which usually plays around one in the first minutes of meeting. After tea she led me up to my bedroom—a pink and white dream—and commanded me to show her my frock, and then rest.

"You must look your very best, child," she said, "and do me credit. Let me see what sort of garment you have brought from the wilds."

Trembling with excitement, I displayed my chiffon fineries. There was a dreadful silence. Then—aunt was satisfied.

I lay down under the silk eiderdown, and slept the sleep of the just till dinner, which was to be graced, I heard to my delight, only by aunt, Uncle Robert, and me. Uncle Robert had always been nice to me, and I loved him, for he had loved mother in the olden days.

At last I stood ready before the cheval glass, and I could not help feeling a pardonable pride in Miss Pillbury's handiwork. "Fine feathers do make fine birds," I reflected, "it's one of the few true proverbs," and I craned my neck to obtain a good back view.

A tap at my door, and the maid came in with a lovely bouquet of lilies and white violets! "From your loving Uncle Robert." An early Valentine! How very, very kind! My cup of happiness was full, and with that delightful hot feeling in my cheeks, with my fan (given me by dear old Hyacinth and Jay) and bouquet in one hand, my chiffon skirt in the other, I went downstairs. When I came within sight of the drawing-room door my heart began to go pit-a-pat. What *should* I do? I suddenly felt so young and foolish. There was the wide stretch of parquet, and the palms and flowers, and the musicians tuning up. I nearly turned and fled. If only Hyacinth had been there, someone whose hand I could clutch. I crept in and saw aunt and uncle standing by the fireplace. I stood stock still, in a sudden overwhelming fit of "dance fright."

"Why, Lalage!" cried Uncle Robert. "How frightened you look—and oh! how pretty!"

Aunt laughed, my fright passed away, and I ran up to uncle and thanked him for the bouquet—and everything was delightful. Aunt kissed me, and said I looked charming, and made me stand next to her at the head of the stairs when the people began to arrive, so I wasn't a bit "lonesome." "You are to be my daughter to-night," she said, and I wondered how I had ever disliked Aunt Pamela.

Such smart girls and elegant young men came flocking up the stairs. Most of them had a very tired look, and a sort of smile that takes off at night, as Jay calls it. Aunt introduced me to a number of the young men, and they

did exactly the same thing like automatic machines. They looked at me, bowed, drew out their ball card, and said, "May I have the pleasure of a dance?"

It began to grow a little monotonous, and my card was nearly covered with scriggly little pencil marks, when a very large lady, covered with yellow satin and diamonds, came up the stairs. "Lady Lillington; Mr. Dalgetty," said the butler.

"My dear Pamela," said the large lady in a large voice, and all in one breath, "so sorry I'm late, but my cook fainted—so inconsiderate of her, couldn't come here starving on bread and cheese—so had to find something at the Carlton. I've brought a friend—Mr. Dalgetty. Is that your niece? Introduce me, dear. Mr. Dalgetty, Miss—er—Miss—er—Penrose; dear me, I must get inside the room. See you later, dear." And she was swept away.

I found myself looking up into the nicest face I had yet seen. That smile did not take off at night, and the eyes were blue and smiling, and not tired and "out-every-evening" looking. Mr. Dalgetty's face was as brown as Jay's, real country tan.

"It's rather a tight corner here, Miss Penrose," he said, noticing that I was being crushed. "Will you make use of my arm to penetrate into the drawing-room, and then, perhaps, you will spare me a dance."

I was only too glad to escape, for I was growing decidedly weary of the throng. Mr. Dalgetty piloted me through the crowd to a remote couch under a palm. Then he looked at my dance card.

"Why, you haven't one dance before the tenth," he said, in a disappointed voice.

"Oh! I am sorry too," I replied.

"Well, may I have that, and will you give me the supper dance," he said.

"Yes," I answered, delighted, and then a partner came out and claimed me for the first dance, and I had to go.

I had a variety of partners; they all made themselves very amiable, and some said very

"OH,' I GASPED AT LAST, 'WHAT MUST YOU THINK OF ME?'" (*p.* 391.)

nice things, and most of them, I believe, danced delightfully. But, oh dear! the crowd! We seemed a solid mass of swaying human beings. I looked forward more and more to No. 10.

I had a few terrible moments, for my No. 9 partner tried to keep me; but I heard the first strains of the band, and rose hastily. I passed aunt as we went upstairs, and she beamed on me.

"You are a great success," she whispered in my ear.

Supposing he had forgotten, I thought. My persistent partner hovered around me—he was a wizened young lord—and I grew anxious as the seconds flew by. At last——

"My dance, I believe, Miss Penrose."

The room was a little clearer, for supper had begun, and I knew in a moment that the best part of the dance was beginning. We skimmed over the ground; never had I dreamed of such a perfect partner.

All too soon the last strains died away, and still under the spell of the music I found myself in the conversatory. Then we began to talk, and it was wonderful what a number of things there were to say. The other partners had been so starched and fashionable and languid that all my "chatter" had been bottled up. Now I simply babbled. "Take care you don't make an ass of yourself," Jay had said, when we were discussing the dance, in his frank, brotherly way. "That tongue of yours is a very unruly member." I did not recollect Jay's advice at the time. Mr. Dalgetty seemed so interested, and it was so refreshing to find a human sort of person, that I found myself telling about everything. I told him it was my first ball, and all about my frock, and Miss Pillbury, and Hyacinth, and father, and Pemberty, and the leg of mutton story, which I have no time to tell here, and no end of things. And at last I found myself telling about The Towers, but it was foolish of me, for I can never speak of them without crying.

"Oh, how I hate the horrid young man who is to have The Towers," I said, trying to keep back my tears by fierceness.

Mr. Dalgetty fidgetted rather, I thought.

"Why—er—why should you?" he said.

"Oh! because I'm envious. I'm breaking the tenth commandment, and behaving 'jolly badly,' as Jay says, but I can't help hating him."

"That's a pity," said Mr. Dalgetty, in a peculiar voice.

"Now, wouldn't you hate him?" I said.

"No, I can't say I should," he replied. "I've heard he's a particularly nice fellow."

"Handsome is as handsome does," I quoted, obstinately. "He has no right to be rich, and nice, and have The Towers. Oh! I wish, I *wish* I could see the dear old home again."

"I wish you could, Miss Penrose; and I'm sure that horrid fellow wishes the same."

I laughed.

"How absurd! He doesn't even know I exist. I wonder," I said, after a pause, "what 'the horrid fellow,' as you call him, looks like."

"I wonder," said Mr. Dalgetty.

"I should think he's small, and plain, and sandy," I said.

"I've no doubt of it," said Mr. Dalgetty.

"And wears spectacles, and plays the flute."

"It's more than likely," said Mr. Dalgetty.

It's dreadful to have a way of talking nonsense, it *does* land you in awful scrapes.

"And takes gruel at night, and can't tell a dragon-fly from a daddy long-legs. But, oh!" I cried, suddenly, "I've been talking all about myself, which isn't right, I'm sure."

"It's quite right, Miss Penrose, from my point of view."

"But I believe I've missed a dance."

"Only one or two," he replied, and there was the most mischievous twinkle in the corner of his eye.

I was simply aghast. I knew—simpleton though I was—that to cut a dance was a heinous crime; and I feared Mr. Dalgetty might think me ill-mannered, and I didn't want that. Oh, it was dreadful! He could not give the signal, and he might have wanted to dance with other girls. I was on the point of crying.

"Oh, dear!" I said, and my bouquet fell to the ground, and we nearly bumped our heads picking it up. "It's all my fault, and that tiresome 'horrid fellow's.'"

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Dalgetty, gaily. "Do you know, I quite begin to like him, Miss

Penrose. It's our supper dance, now, and we have hundreds of things to talk about still."

"Then you don't mind having missed the dances, and you don't think aunt will be angry with me?"

"Not a bit of it. If she is, we'll refer her to the 'horrid fellow.'"

How very quickly sunlight follows shade. Everything seemed so bright again.

"Do you know," I said, as we went downstairs, "you haven't told me where you live. Exchange is no robbery, and I've told you all about us, so you must tell me all about you."

"I'm afraid you will be so angry with me if I do."

I was puzzled.

"Angry? Why should I be angry? Do tell me."

He hesitated a moment, and I felt such a funny, delightful feeling as his twinkling eyes looked down into mine.

"Very well, to-morrow, if you promise not to be angry."

I thought a moment.

"*To-morrow*—but perhaps I shall not see you to-morrow. And, anyhow, it's a long while to wait."

He took out his watch, and showed it to me.

"Oh! I see, it's nearly to-morrow, of course. How silly of me. Jay says it takes two strong men to make me see a joke; but then brothers always do say those things."

"Jay knows nothing whatever about it," replied my partner, almost savagely, I remember. Then, in an altered tone, "So you won't be angry if I tell you."

"Angry, no! How absurd! I can't think why I should be angry."

"Then you promise?"

"Yes."

"Will you give me a white violet as a token? Remember it's St. Valentine's Eve."

"Yes;" and I gave him one. I did wish Hyacinth had been there, it seemed *so* romantic, and Ivanhoeish.

Then we went down to supper, and we did have fun. Mr. Dalgetty found a little table all to ourselves, and such a dear, fatherly old waiter to look after us.

"I can't help feeling sorry for that poor chap we were talking about," said my partner.

"Which poor chap?" I asked.

"Oh, that 'horrid fellow,' I mean. I suppose he's eating his gruel—wasn't that the supper you accused him of, Miss Penrose?—in solitary state."

"Oh, don't bother about him—don't spoil the evening," I said; "he's happy enough, I'm sure, with his flute—and The Towers. But (for I had my eye on the clock) it's twelve——"

Twelve strokes from the great clock.

As the last one died away:

"It's to-morrow," I said, "and I'm as curious as most people. Now for your promise!"

"Dick Dalgetty is my name, Smallwood is my uncle's, and The Towers is to be my dwelling-place. Now, remember your promise and the white violet, for I really couldn't help it."

I was stricken dumb.

"Oh," I gasped, at last. "What *must* you think of me? How——"

"Please don't say anything more," he interposed, "but have another ice, and please, of your charity, give me *all* the dances after supper!"

* * * * *

Some years have passed since that St. Valentine's Eve, but I always celebrate the anniversary of it. For I live at The Towers again owing to my first ball and "that horrid fellow."

From the Painting by Hubert Herkomer, R.A.

MISS LOUISE DALE.

Without whom a Ballad Concert does not seem complete.

Some Famous Ballad Singers.

By SENTA K. LUDOVIC.

"I CAN only sing ballads," is an apologetic remark one often hears when a girl is asked to sing. It means that the singer is well aware that ballads are the simplest form of the art of singing, also that she thinks herself perfectly qualified to sing a ballad, but would not dare to attempt an aria of any description.

Listening to other singers is therefore a great help to learning a tasteful and correct interpretation of songs and ballads. I have collected a few portraits of prominent singers who are often heard at ballad concerts; it may interest our girl readers to know something about them, how and where they learned their art, and so on.

The ballad singer proper is, so to say, extinct in our days; artists do not confine themselves to songs only, but use their talent far more often for oratorio or opera. Nevertheless many of them have sung themselves into the hearts of the people with simple songs and ballads.

Miss Evangeline Florence must first be spoken of in that sense, and because she is known to many girls of The Girl's Realm Guild, who much enjoyed her charming singing at the G.R.G. Reunion at Leighton House in January, 1901. Miss Florence is a Bostonian by birth, and has studied principally with Mme. Hall, a well-known teacher in that town. She has a voice of extraordinary extension in the treble, great facility of execution, and particularly great charm of expression. She sings also in oratorio, and is a remarkably successful interpreter of Mozart arias, etc. It was she who sang the soprano solos when Mdme. Liza Lehmann's "Persian Garden" was heard for the first time at the "Monday Pop," and her charming interpretation of the solos in the song-cycle "The Daisy Chain," by the same composer, is so well-known that I need not dwell upon them. *The Times* of 5th February, 1896, writes about her singing in Brahms's Requiem at the Queen's Hall. "In the beautiful but exacting solo for soprano, which lies almost out of reach of ordinary singers, the pure voice and style of Miss Evangeline Florence were admirably suited; and she completely realised the unearthly character of the disembodied spirit."

It is Miss Florence's refinement and personal charm which makes her singing so attractive. She is a skilful artist, and possesses the fascination of a simple and winning manner. Her repertoire of songs must be particularly interesting to girls: I will therefore name a few of the most successful ones. The "Minuet," by Liza Lehmann, in which a child is made to teli

artlessly how her grandmother danced, "The Swing Song," and "If no one ever marries me," from the song-cycle, "The Daisy Chain," etc., etc.; then amongst Mr. Samuel Liddle's effective compositions, "The Moth and the Maiden" and "Love's Evening Song."

Miss Evangeline Florence's home-life is a very happy one. She lives in a pretty flat at South Kensington, where she sometimes calls together her friends and fellow artists to enjoy some good music. Though a very serious artist, she is never pedantic, always interested in others, full of tact, and gifted with that precious quality, personal charm, which makes her a favourite amongst her large circle of friends.

MME. LILIAN BLAUVELT.

Who is enthusiastically greeted whenever she appears at a Ballad Concert.

Mme. Lilian Blauvelt is enthusiastically greeted whenever she makes her appearance at a ballad concert. But she is more often heard at the Symphony Concerts at the Queen's Hall. Hers is a voice of rarest beauty, a pure soprano of warm timbre and bell-like penetration. This exquisite voice has been entirely trained by Mons. Bouhy, the great Parisian teacher. Mme. Blauvelt, was a precocious child, and has realised all the promise of her early years, though not in the same manner as was expected. At the age of seven years she achieved her first success at a concert in America as a violinist. She worked hard at this instrument, and when sixteen years old her reputation as a violinist was well established. It was then that her beautiful voice was discovered, and she would not rest till she was taken to Paris, where this precious gift was properly developed. No doubt the training of ear which the violinist received was a great help to the singer, whose intonation is now not only never at fault, but is exceptionally pure.

Photo, Window & Grove.

MRS. HELEN TRUST.

Than whom none is more celebrated as a singer of Ballads

Mme. Blauvelt sang at a State Concert, and had the honour of singing to Queen Victoria, who surprised her by knowing all about her. The Queen showed the kindest interest in all that might concern the young singer, complimented her very much and gave her a brooch as a souvenir. The Queen of Italy also gave her her portrait, with a flattering dedication written in Queen Margharita's own hand; it is framed in ancient parchment, ornamented with gold. Mme. Blauvelt had been commanded to sing at the Quirinal (the Royal Palace in Rome), after having sung the solos of the Requiem at the Verdi Concert given by the Society of St. Cäcilia. Mme. Blauvelt, just then on her wedding tour, had not the least intention of singing in public; but when she heard that the Society was in

great difficulties, the soprano who had been engaged for the concert being ill, she came forward and offered to sing for them, gratis, to do honour to the dead master. Those responsible for the festival accepted gratefully, but were, nevertheless, not without misgivings when they heard that the singer did not know the part, but had to learn it in four days. She succeeded, though, with her task, and the Romans were not reticent with their appreciation. The President, Count Moriani, sent her the next day, in the name of the Society as a token of their gratitude, the bronze model of one of the most celebrated fountains by Michael Angelo. The following year she was engaged again to sing in Rome, and received one of the greatest honours which is bestowed on musicians—the Order of St. Cäcilia. This Order of the Academy of St. Cäcilia, founded in 1585, can only be given to twenty-five Italians and to thirty-five foreigners, and is awarded for highest merit in music. During 316 years it has been only given to eight foreigners, never to a woman before Mme. Blauvelt.

Mme. Blauvelt sings simple songs beautifully, and must be heard for this purpose at one of her own recitals, or in a ballad concert, because in other concerts bigger things fall to her share. She sings also in oratorios, and made her début in opera in Brussels. Travelling a great deal in Europe and in America, she is rarely at home at her house at New York, where she has stored so many interesting souvenirs and art treasures collected by her and her husband. Mme. Blauvelt is small, and has a sweet *piquante* face ; she is an enthusiastic artist and a womanly woman.

Miss Louise Dale, without whom a ballad concert does not seem complete, is of Irish descent, and shares the beauty of the Irish race in a great measure. She was born at Teignmouth. Her school years were spent in an English convent, and already then she sang like a bird, unrestrained and sweet. Mme. Sophy Lowe, undertook the first training of the young girl's voice. Later on Miss Louise Dale went to Germany and studied with Stockhausen, the celebrated singer and teacher. In 1894 she returned to London and made her first appearance at a "Monday Pop," with Grieg's "Songs my mother taught me." It was not a big voice we heard then, but one of infinite charm. Miss Louise Dale is unaffected, even self-contained, when she sings. "Come, you little dear, my soul," by Liza Lehmann, or "A little story of all that happens to baby sailing up to the sky whilst dreaming in her trundlebed," become, through Miss Louise Dale's singing, gems of art. The voice is a high soprano.

Miss Dale's reputation was just beginning to be well established when an accident on the river threatened to put a stop to her whole career. She and a lady friend were on the Thames in a canoe, when the boat capsized. They were both a long time in the river before help came, and the consequence was that Miss Dale became very ill with pneumonia. She had to winter abroad and rest for twelve months. Fortunately her voice came back as beautiful as ever, and had gained in strength. She continued her studies for some years with Mr. Georg Henschel, at the same time singing constantly in public.

Last summer she was married at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, to Mr. Hamilton Earle. Since her marriage she has devoted some time to further studies in Paris, and in the Ballad Concerts in the Queen's Hall this autumn charmed the audience as usual.

Mrs. Helen Trust, the graceful singer of ballads, has been already mentioned in THE GIRL'S REALM amongst "Girls that Norfolk is proud of." She was born in Norwich and became a student at the Royal Academy. Mrs. Helen Trust reminds one of Dresden china, if such comparison is permissible. Everything about her is dainty, from her pretty face, her figure, her beautiful blonde hair, and her refined, quiet manner. Her singing is in absolute harmony with these personal characteristics. Her voice is a soprano. Old English songs are her favourites ; she sings also French and German with beautiful accent and understanding. Miss Joachim was her teacher ; I have heard Germans greatly admire her rendering of Schubert's songs. She sings at the popular concerts, at ballad concerts, at the Folk Song Society, etc., also in the provinces. Norwich became enthusiastic when she sang at the Festival there. Mrs. Trust

MISS ETHEL BIRD.
Photo H. S. Mendelssohn.

MISS ADA CROSSLEY.
Photo. Russell & Sons, Baker Street.

MME. MARIAN MCKENZIE.
Photo. Ellis & Walery.

MISS EVANGELINE FLORENCE.
Famous for her rendering of Liza Lehmann's Song-cycles, "In a Persian Garden" and "The Daisy Chain."

can be given as a model for beautiful enunciation and style.

Miss Ada Crossley is scarcely a stranger to any music lover in London or in the provinces. At ballad concerts she is the greatest favourite, although oratorios are particularly her domain. She is an Australian, and has all her country-people's pleasant, straightforward and unaffected manner. Her childhood was spent 200 miles away from Melbourne, amongst the big timber trees and ferns at a station. She sang already then to her family, but at the top of her voice, not knowing of the pure gold of her lower notes. When she was seventeen years old her schooling was considered finished, and now she had her will to go to Melbourne and study singing there with Mme. Fany Smouth. After having established herself as a public favourite, she received a farewell address from the town, testifying to her great powers as a singer, before leaving Melbourne for Paris to study with Madame Mathilde Marchesi and afterwards with Mr. Santley in London.

A more beautifully equalised voice than Miss Ada Crossley's can hardly be wished for. She has introduced many a good ballad and song which are now popular; composers delight in bringing their work to her, and she is never slow in giving a good song a first trial. Being a thorough musician, she is aware of the great treasures contained in German song literature, and is studying German *lieder* with great interest.

The Royal Academy of Music claims Mme. Marian McKenzie as one of its most distinguished students. She held here the Parepa Rosa scholarship; and the gold medal, at that time the highest reward the Academy bestowed, was also hers. Cavaliere Randegger has the merit of having trained that beautiful voice, and Mme. McKenzie feels indebted to him for guiding her to that interpretation of ballads for which she is so famous. But Mme. McKenzie is also principally an oratorio singer; London and the provinces know her well in that capacity. She was a North Country girl; there is something breezy, hearty, and impulsive in her personality, which makes one think of the "North Countrie."

MISS MARIE BREMA.

Who has sung at Covent Garden, in Bayreuth, and at the Grand Opera in Paris.

As a singer she finds the most pathetic expression for a sad song, but her conversation is brimming over with humour. "'The Bailiff's Daughter of Islington,' is an important ballad for me," she said. "My husband was amongst the audience when I sang it at a Promenade Concert, and pretends that after hearing it he made up his mind to marry me. So you may tell the girls this ballad meant a husband in my case." In a moment she was engaged in a very serious discussion on art with me. This impulsive temperament, changing so easily from one impression to another, is the fundamental cause of what is best and most charming in her singing.

Miss Marie Brema, who is occasionally heard in a ballad concert, is really an opera-singer. Her full, rich mezzo-soprano and her dramatic talent make her singing of songs most impressive. She sang at Covent Garden, in Bayreuth, at the Grand Opera in Paris with great success, and to her fell the honour of singing the great scene of Kundry, from "Parsifal," to Queen Victoria, two years ago. It was the first time that the late Queen heard any music of the later works of Wagner. Miss Brema sings German as well as English. Her father was a German, her mother an American; she was born in Liverpool. Mr. Georg Henschel was her first teacher, and later on she became a pupil of Mme. Bessie Cox and of Alfred Blume. As Lieder and ballad singer of the finest type it is only possible to hear Miss Brema at one of her own recitals.

Miss Marie Roberts is another English singer who may be of interest to girls, particularly to those who lived in the provinces. She sings occasionally in London. I have heard her sing charmingly the soprano part of the "Persian Garden" at the recital in the Steinway Hall. She is the daughter of an Anglo-Indian staff officer and was educated at a school in Brighton. Herr Lütgen, the professor of singing there, first noticed her musical disposition, and pretty voice. He encouraged her to study for a professional career, but her family was averse to the idea. However, she managed to secure the consent of her father for the project, and took some lessons at Dr. Wylde's Academy. Then she studied with Mr. Shakespeare, and went afterwards for one winter to Paris to work under Mons. Bouhy's guidance. "Last, but by no means least," she told me, "I went to Miss Hilda Wilson, to whom I am deeply grateful for all the encouragement and help she gave me." This clever singer taught her to love oratorio music, of which she is herself such a famous exponent.

Miss Roberts studied a large repertoire, sang and travelled a good deal in the provinces, and was very successful. But the fatigue of travelling, and great nervousness, which never seemed to wear off, made her choose the quieter life of a teacher. She has a large connection in Suffolk, and spends the winter in Felixstowe, teaching and encouraging other young girls to sing.

Photo. Mabel Lommitz.

MISS MARIE ROBERTS.
Well known in the Provinces as a ballad singer.

Miss Ethel Bird is quite a fledgling among the professional singers, but her little history is not without interest, and many of our girl readers may like to follow her gradual progress, Her pretty voice has been developed by Mme. Blanche Marchesi, about whose cleverness in imparting her own great art this pupil of hers cannot say enough. She considered Mme. Marchesi to be the cause of the most desirable change in her life. Miss Bird is the daughter of the well-known accompanist and organist at St. Mary Abbots, High Street, Kensington, Mr. Henry Bird. It is astonishing that the daughter of such a musician exhibited no particular gift for music when a child, or, rather, it was not remarkable enough to attract the attention of her father. She gave herself up to serious linguistic studies, passed her Oxford exam., and considered music, as far as her own doings were concerned, as a charming pastime, which she timidly cultivated.

Then Mme. Blanche Marchesi, who came frequently to see her parents, said one day, in her kindly way, to her, "Can you sing, too, and do you like it?" "Oh!" was the answer, "I have no voice, but I should like nothing so much as to be able to sing." "Sing me a little song," she was asked. After hearing her, Mme. Marchesi undertook the training of that young voice, which is now a remarkably fresh, pleasing and flexible one. The singer has already received much recognition at concerts in London and in the provinces. Her voice and her style make her a singer of songs and ballads, and the first success, with Arne's "Polly Willis," is likely to be followed by many more.

Girls who want to know about Madame Clara Butt will find in the January, 1901, issue of THE GIRL'S REALM a full account of her in the series "How I began."

To Our Musical Readers.

A PRIZE FOR THE BEST SONG.

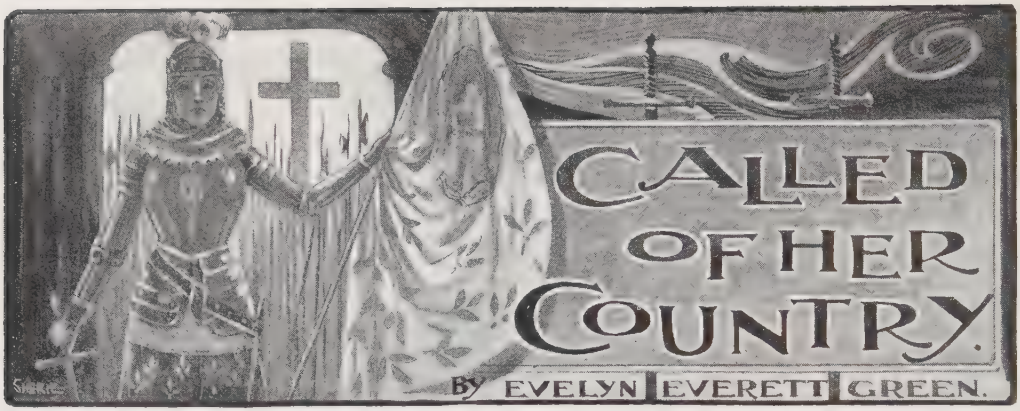
MADAME LIZA LEHMANN *has kindly consented to decide for us in this Competition.*

WE have arranged a Musical Competition, which we trust may be the means of obtaining wider recognition for the work of some girl with a genius for the writing of songs. The competition is open to every girl, without distinction, under the age of twenty-five. The competitors are to take a song, the choice of which is left entirely to their discretion—grave or gay, martial or domestic—and to set it to music. The fact that Mme. Liza Lehmann, the celebrated composer of "The Persian Garden" and "The Daisy Chain," has consented to be the judge, will make the award of very great importance, and the publication of the successful song in THE GIRL'S REALM should secure universal recognition for the work if it proves to be worthy.

There will be one Prize of the value of FIVE GUINEAS, and five Diplomas will be awarded. The songs are to reach the office, THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C., not later than May 30th, 1902.

We are hoping that there will be a universal response to this offer. Will our readers kindly bring the matter to the notice of any girl they may know who has a gift for composition?

The copyright of the successful song will become the property of the Proprietors of THE GIRL'S REALM.



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THE MAID WON A NEW NAME.

"ENTREZ, entrez—de la part de Dieu—all is yours!"

Thus spoke the Maid, as we rushed the tower of the boulevard, the English flying this way and that before us. The Maid found herself face to face with the commander—that Sir William Glasdale, who had called her vile names a few days before, and had promised to burn her for a witch if once she fell into his hands.

But she had no ill words for him, as she saw him, sword in hand, seeking to make a last stand upon the drawbridge leading to Les Tourelles.

"Now yield you, Classidas," she said; "I bear you no ill-will. I have great pity for your soul. Yield you, and all shall be well."

But he would not listen; his face was black like a thunder-cloud, and with his picked bodyguard of men, he retreated backwards, sword in hand, upon the bridge, seeking to gain the other tower, not knowing its desperate condition, and hoping there to make a last stand.

But he was not destined to achieve his end. Suddenly the bridge gave way beneath his feet, and he and his men were all precipitated into the water. It looked to us as though a miracle had been wrought before our eyes; as though the gaze of the Maid had done it. But the truth was afterwards told us, that a fire-ship from the city had been sent across and had burned the bridge, cutting off the retreat of the English that way. And now we heard the din of battle going on within Les Tourelles; for La Hire had crossed the repaired bridge with a gallant band of soldiers, and our men, hearing the shouts of their comrades, and the cries of the trapped English, flung themselves into boats, or swam over, sword in mouth, anything to get to the scene of the fray; whilst others set to work with planks, and whatever they could lay hands upon, to mend the broken drawbridge that they might swarm across into Les Tourelles and join in the final act of victory, that should free Orleans from the iron grip in which she had been held so long.

But the face of the Maid was troubled, as she looked into the dark water which had closed over the head of Glasdale and his men. She had seized upon a coil of rope; she stood ready to fling it towards them when they rose; but encased as they were in their heavy mail, there was no rising for them. Long did she gaze into the black, blood-stained water; but she gazed in vain; and when she raised her eyes, I saw that they were swimming in tears.

"I would we might have saved them," she spoke, with a little catch in her voice, "I have such great pity for their souls!"

These were the first words I heard the Maid speak after her wonderful victory had been won; and whilst others went hither and thither, mad or drunk with joy, she busied herself about the wounded, making no distinction betwixt friend or foe, sending urgent message into the city for priests to come forth and bring the last Sacraments with them, and so long as there were any dying to be confessed or consoled, or wounded to be cared for and transported into the city, she seemed to have no thought for aught beside. Thankful joy was indeed in her heart, but her

tender woman's pity was so stirred by sights of suffering and death that for the moment she could think of nothing else.

Thus the daylight faded, and we began to think of return. How shall I describe the sight which greeted our eyes in the gathering dusk, as we looked towards the city? One might have thought that the English had fired it, so bright was the glare in which it was enveloped; but we knew better. Bonfires were blazing in every square, in every open place. Nay, more, from the very roofs of tower and church great pillars of flame were ascending to the heavens. Joy-bells had rung before this; but never with such a wild jubilation, such a clamour of palpitating triumph. The city had gone mad in its joy—and it was no marvel—and all were awaiting the return of the Maid, to whom this miraculous deliverance was due. Eight days—eight days of the Maid—and the seven-month siege was raised! Was it wonderful they should hunger for her presence amongst them? Was it wonderful that every house should seek to hang out a white banner in honour of the Angelic Maid, and her pure whiteness of soul and body?

"I will come to you by the bridge," had been her own word; and now, behold, the bridge was there! Like Trojans had the men worked beneath the eagle eyes of La Hire. An army had already crossed from the city; now that their task was done, the Maid's white charger had been led across, and the cry was all for her, for her; that she should let the people see her alive and well, now that her task was accomplished and Orleans was free!

She let us mount her upon her horse, and D'Aulon marched in front with the great white standard. Weary and white and wan was she, with the stress of the fight, with the pain and loss of blood from her wound, above all, with her deep, unfailing pity for the sufferings she had been forced to witness, for the souls gone to their last account without the sacred offices of the Church. All this weighed upon her young spirit, and gave a strange, ethereal loveliness to her pale face and shining eyes. Methought she seemed almost more like some angelic presence in our midst than a creature of human flesh and blood.

The generals formed an advance guard before her. The soldiers followed, rank behind rank, in the rear. We of her household rode immediately in her wake, ready to protect her, if need be, from the too great pressure of the crowd. And so we crossed the hastily-repaired bridge, and entered by the Bride Gate—or St. Catherine's gate, as it is equally called; for a figure of St. Catherine stands carved in a niche above the porch, and I saw the Maid glance upwards at it as she passed through, a smile upon her lips.

Shall I ever forget the thunder of applause which fell upon our ears as we passed into the city through the bridge? It was like the "sound of many waters"—deafening in volume and intensity. And was it wonder? Had not something very like a miracle been wrought? For had not rumours reached the city many times that day of the death of the Deliverer in the hour of victory? None well knew what to believe till they saw her in their midst, and then the cry which rent the heavens was such as methinks is heard but once in a lifetime.

I know not who first spoke the words; but once spoken, they were caught up by ten thousand throats, and the blazing heavens echoed them back in great waves of rolling sound:

"THE MAID OF ORLEANS! THE MAID OF ORLEANS! Welcome, honour, glory, praise to THE MAID OF ORLEANS!"

The people were well nigh mad with joy; they rushed upon her to kiss her hands, her knees, the folds of her banner, the neck or the flanks of her horse. In the red glare of the hundred bonfires the whiteness of her armour seemed to take a new lustre. The rent upon the shoulder could be plainly seen, showing where the arrow had torn its way. Women sobbed aloud as they looked; men cursed the hand which had shot the bolt; all joined in frantic cheers of joy to see her riding alone, erect and smiling, though with a dreamy stillness of countenance which physical lassitude in part accounted for.

"I thank you, my friends, I thank you," she kept saying, as though no other words would come, save when now and again she would add, "But to God must you give your thanks and blessings. It is He who has delivered you."

It was not far to the house of the Treasurer, and there on the threshold stood the little Charlotte, a great wreath of bay and laurel in her tiny hands. She was lifted up in her father's strong arms, and ere the Maid was able to dismount from her horse the little one had placed the triumphal wreath upon her fair head.

O, what a shout arose! It was like the mighty burst of some great thunder storm. The Maid, blushing now at the tumult of applause, stretched out her arms, took the little one into them, and held her in a close embrace whilst she bowed her last graceful thanks to the joy-maddened crowd. Then she slipped from her horse, and holding the little one fast by the hand, disappeared into the

house, whilst the crowd reluctantly dispersed to hear the story all over again from the soldiers pouring in, each with some tale of his own to tell of the prowess of THE MAID OF ORLEANS.

Yes, that was the name by which she was henceforth to be known. The city was wild with joy and pride thus to christen her. And she, having crossed by the bridge, as she had said, sat down for a brief while to that festal board which had been spread for her. But fatigue soon overmastering her, she retired to her room, only pausing to look at us all and say:

"To-morrow is the Lord's own day of rest. Remember that, my friends. Let there be no fighting, no pursuit, no martial exercise, whatever the foe may threaten or do. To-morrow must be a day of thanksgiving and praise. Look to it that my words are obeyed."

They said she slept like a child that night; yet with the early light of day she was up, kneeling in the Cathedral with her household beside her, listening to the sound of chant and prayer, receiving the Holy Sacrament, the pledge of her Lord's love.

Not until we had returned from that first duty did she listen to what was told her anent the movements of the English. They were drawn up in battle array upon the north side of the river, spoke those who had gone to the battlements to look. Thinned as were their ranks, they were still a formidable host, and from the menace of their attitude it might be that they expected the arrival of reinforcements. Would it not be well, spoke La Hire, to go forth against them at once, whilst the soldiers' hearts were flushed with victory, whilst the memory of yesterday's triumphs was green within them?

But the Maid, hitherto all in favour of the most dashing and daring policy, answered now, with a shake of the head.

"It is Sunday, my generals," she replied; "the day of my Lord. The day He has hallowed to His service." She paused a moment, and added, quite gently, and without reproach, "Had you acted as I did counsel, the English would now have had no footing on the north side of the river; they must needs have fled altogether from the neighbourhood of the city. Nevertheless my Lord is merciful. He helps, though men hinder His designs. Let no man stir forth with carnal weapons against the foe this day. We will use other means to vanquish them."

Then turning to me, she bid me go to the Bishop, and ask him to give her audience; and shortly she was ushered into his presence, and we waited long for her to reappear.

How shall I tell of that wonderful scene which the sun looked down upon that bright May morning, when the purpose of the Maid became fully revealed to us? Even now it seems rather as a dream, than as an incident in a terrible war.

Out upon the level plain, in full sight of the city, in full view of the serried ranks of the English army, a great white altar was set up. The army from Orleans marched out and stood bare-headed beneath the walls, unarmed by order of the Maid, save for the small weapon every man habitually carried at his belt, citizen as well as soldier. The townspeople flocked to the walls, or out into the plain, as pleased them best; and from the Renart Gate there issued forth a grave and sumptuous procession: the Bishop in his vestments, accompanied by all the ecclesiastics within the city walls, each of them robed, attended by acolytes swinging censers, the incense cloud ascending through the sunny air, tapers swaying in the breeze, their light extinguished by the brilliance of the sunshine.

The Maid in her white tunic, with a white mantle over her shoulders, followed with bent head, leading the little Charlotte by the hand, succeeded by her household.

And there, in the sight of the rival armies, High Mass was celebrated by the Bishop, both armies kneeling devoutly, and turning towards the Altar as one man. Never have I witnessed such a scene. Never shall I witness such another.

The Mass over, the procession filed back through the gate, both armies kneeling motionless till it had disappeared. Then the Maid rose, and we with her, and followed her in its wake, and the French army, in perfect order, re-entered the city by the appointed gates, as had been ordered.

One hour later and the Maid sent D'Aulon up to the battlements to look what the English army was doing. He returned to say that they were still drawn up in rank as before.

"Which way are their faces?" she asked.

"Their faces are turned away from the city," was the reply.

The countenance of the Maid brightened with a great light.

"Then let them go, *a part de Dieu!*" she answered. "My God, I thank Thee for this great grace!"

And so, without further battle or bloodshed, the English army marched away from Orleans; and upon the next morning not a man of the foe was left; and the citizens pouring out from the town, destroyed, with acclamations of joy, those great

"SUDDENLY THE BRIDGE GAVE WAY BENEATH HIS FEET, AND GLASDALE AND HIS MEN WERE ALL PRECIPITATED INTO THE WATER."—(*p.* 3[illegible])

bastilles, which had so long sheltered the foe and threatened the safety of the city.

It was a day ever to be remembered. The bells pealed ceaselessly, the houses were decked with garlands; white banners or silken pennons floated everywhere, the townsfolk arrayed themselves in holiday garb, and poured out through the gates to wander at will over the plain, so lately held by the English. Gladness and the wonder of a great relief was stamped upon every face, and constantly song of triumph arose, or thunders of applause, in which the burden always was—THE MAID OF ORLEANS! THE MAID OF ORLEANS!

They would have kept her with them for ever, if it might so have been. They talked wildly, yet earnestly, of building her a palace, where she should live at ease all the rest of her days, the object of universal admiration and homage. But the Maid listened to such words, when repeated to her, with a dreamy smile. Her wound required rest; and for two days she consented to remain quiet in the house of the Treasurer, lying for the most part upon a couch in a great cool chamber, with the little Charlotte for her companion and playfellow. She sometimes rose and showed herself at a window, in answer to the tumultuous shoutings of the crowd without; and she received with pleasure some great baskets and bouquets of flowers which the wives and children of the citizens culled for her. But she gently put aside all suggestions of rewards for herself, which some would fain have bestowed upon the Deliverer, and which men of all ranks were but too ready to claim and receive for service rendered.

"I have all that I want myself—and more," she said; "if any would offer gifts, let them be thank-offerings to the Lord. Let the poor receive alms, let Masses be sung for the souls of those killed in the war; but for me—I want nothing but the love of the people of France. I am come to do the will of my Lord. I ask only His approving smile."

And all the while she was eagerly desirous to return to the King, and urge upon him the need to repair instantly to Rheims, and there receive his crown. To her he was not truly King till he had been anointed as such. She knew that the blow to the English arms just struck must have a paralysing effect upon their forces, and that a rapid march with even a small army would be accomplished without resistance, if only it were quickly made. I need not say that the city of Rheims lay in the very heart of territory owning the English sway. To reach that city we must perforce march right through a hostile country, garrisoned by the enemy. But of that the Maid made light.

"The hearts of the people will turn towards us," she said. "They have submitted to the English yoke; but they are Frenchmen still. Once let them see that the power of the enemy is broken, and they will rally to our standard. But precious time should not be lost. The Dauphin should place himself at the head of such an army as he can spare for the march, and journey forthwith to Rheims. There shall the crown be set upon his head—the pledge and earnest that one day he shall rule the whole realm of France, as his fathers did before him!"

And so, before a week had passed, we set forth with the Maid to go to the King, who had by this time moved his Court from Chinon to Loches, another fortress upon the Loire, where there was space for his train, and which could, if necessary, be fortified against a siege.

It was a strange journey—more like a triumphal progress than anything we had yet met with. The fame of the Maid and her miraculous exploit in the matter of the siege of Orleans had gone before her, and from every town or village through which she passed the people flocked out to see her, bearing garlands and banners, crowding about her, asking her blessing, seeking to touch her, pouring out blessings and praises, so that the heart of anyone less filled with the humility which comes from above must needs have been altogether puffed up and filled with pride. But it was never so with the Maid. Her gentle courtesy and devout humility never failed her. Lovingly and gratefully she received love and affection, but praise and honour she set aside, bidding all remember that to God alone belonged the issues from death, and that she was but an instrument in His mighty hands.

We wondered how she would be received at the Court, and whether La Tremouille and her other adversaries had been convinced of her divine mission, and would now remove all opposition. As we approached the fortress we saw that flags were floating from every tower; that the place wore a festive aspect, and that the town was pouring out to welcome us and gaze upon the Maid.

Then, with a great fanfare of trumpets, the gates of the fortress were flung wide open, and forth came a gay procession, in the midst of which we could not doubt, rode the King himself.

Yes, there was no doubt of it. The crowd parted this way and that, and we saw how the young King himself was marching towards us, and at the sight of the Maid, not only did every courtier in the train uncover, but the King himself bared his head, and bowed low to the MAID OF ORLEANS.

She was off her horse in a moment, kneeling

at his feet; but he raised her instantly, held her hands in his, gave her thanks with true emotion in face and voice, and, turning to her brothers, who rode amongst us of her household, he cried to them in loud tones, saying that it was his will that the family of the D'Arcs should henceforth have the right to quarter the lilies of France on their arms! An empty honour, perhaps, to simple peasants; and yet an honour that the proudest families in the land might envy!

They carried her into the fortress. The two Queens and the ladies of the Court knew not how to make enough of her. They seemed to think that our coming must be regarded as the signal for an outburst of merry-making and carousing such as the King found so much to his liking. It amazed us to find him still wrapped in idle luxury, joyful, it is true, over the relief of Orleans, over the discomfiture of the English; but as indisposed as ever to take the field himself, or to put himself at the head of an army and march to his coronation as the Maid instantly urged him.

"Gentle Dauphin, the Lord would have you King of your realm; He would set the crown upon your head. He has smitten your enemies and scattered them. Then wherefore not do His will and march to the appointed spot? All will be well if you but follow His counsels."

"But Maiden, I have so few troops; and I have no money; and the way lies through a hostile land," the King would urge, when day after day she pleaded with him. "All my counsellors advise delay. Is it not right that I should listen to them as well as to you? Wherefore such haste? Is it not wiser to act with deliberation and prudence?"

"It is right to follow the voice of the Lord," spoke the Maid with grave and forceful earnestness, "and to put your trust in Him rather than in any child of man."

But the King could not be persuaded; indolence and fear held him captive, whilst his traitorous advisers sought by every means to undermine the influence of the Maid. And although in this they were not successful, and he believed in her mission, admired her prowess, and looked to her for guidance and help, he must needs listen also to these others who were of contrary mind, and so the weary days dragged on, and nothing was done.

"Noble Dauphin," pleaded the Maid at last, "hold not such long or so many councils; or if, indeed, these be needful to you, let me, I pray you, go forth again with a small army and clear the way. And when all the country betwixt this place and Rheims has submitted to your power, then follow yourself, and take your kingdom!"

Ah me!—to think that he, a King, could consent again to let her go thus, whilst he remained

"THE MAID STRETCHED OUT HER ARMS, TOOK THE LITTLE ONE INTO THEM, AND HELD HER IN A CLOSE EMBRACE."—(*p.* 399.)

in ease and indolence surrounded by his Court! But so it was. What she could not persuade him to do himself, she at last obtained leave to do for him, and with a joyful face she came to us with the news:

"Gentlemen and my good comrades, be ready for a speedy march; we will go forward and clear the way; and afterwards the Dauphin shall follow and be made King!"

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW THE MAID CLEARED THE KING'S WAY.

WE started forth from Selles, where the army which was to do this work had assembled. It was not so great a force as it would have been but for the hesitations of the King, and the delays imposed by his Council. For the men who had marched from Orleans, flushed with victory, eager to rush headlong upon the foe and drive them back to their own shores, had grown weary of the long waiting, and had been infected by the timidity or the treachery of those about the Court. They had melted away by little and little, carrying with them the booty they had found in the English bastilles round Orleans, glad to return to their homes and their families without further fighting, though had the Maid been permitted to place herself at their head at once, as she did desire, they would have followed her to the death.

Still, when all was said and done, it was a gallant troop that responded to her call and mustered at her summons. The magic of her name still thrilled all hearts, and throughout the march of events which followed it was always the common soldiers who trusted implicitly in the Maid; they left doubts and disputings and unworthy jealousies to the officers and the statesmen.

The Maid went forth with a greater glory and honour than has, methinks, ever been bestowed upon woman before—certainly upon no humbly-born maiden of seventeen years. Some said that she was actually ennobled in her own person by the grant to quarter the lilies of France, and that her brothers ranked now amongst the knights and nobles. Others declared that she had refused all personal honours, and that she still remained a humble peasant, though so high in the favour of the King, and so great a personage in the realm. As for me, I cared nothing for all this. To me she was always the Angelic Maid, heaven-sent, miraculous, apart from the earth, though living amongst us and leading us on to victory. To the army she was THE MAID OF ORLEANS—and that was enough. She was the companion and friend of princes, nobles, and knights; but she was never as others were. An atmosphere of sanctity seemed ever to encompass her. All who approached her did her unconscious homage. None could be with her long without being conscious that she was visited by sounds unheard by them, that her eyes saw sights to which theirs were closed. We were to have added witness to this in the days which followed.

So here we were gathered at Selles upon that bright June morning, just one month after the fall of Orleans. The King had presented to the Maid a great black charger; a mighty creature of immense strength and spirit, but with something of a wicked look in his rolling eyes which made me anxious as he was led forward. The Maid in her white armour—its rent deftly mended, its silver brilliance fully restored—with her velvet white-plumed cap upon her head and a little axe in her hand, stood waiting to mount. But perhaps it was the gleaming whiteness of this slender figure that startled the horse, or else the cries and shouts of the populace at sight of the Maid excited him to the verge of terror; for he reared and plunged so madly as his rider approached that it was with difficulty he was held by two stalwart troopers, and we all begged of the Maid not to trust herself upon his back.

She looked at us with a smile, and made a little courteous gesture with her hand; then turning to the attendants she said:

"Lead him yonder to the cross at the entrance to the church; I will mount him there."

Snorting and struggling, casting foam flakes from his lips, and fighting every inch of the way, the great charger was led whither the Maid had said. But once arrived at the foot of the cross, he suddenly became perfectly quiet. He stood like a statue whilst the Maid approached, caressed him gently with the hand from which she had drawn her mailed gauntlet, and, after speaking kindly words to him, vaulted lightly on his back. From that moment her conquest of the fierce creature was complete. He carried her throughout that wonderful week with a gentleness and docility, and an untiring strength which was beautiful to see. The brute creation owned her sway as well as did men of understanding, who could watch and weigh her acts and deeds.

So, amid the plaudits of the people, the fanfare of trumpets, the rolling of drums, the rhythmical tread of thousands of mailed feet, we rode forth from Selles, led by the Maid, beside whom rode the King's cousin, the Duc d'Alençon, now re-

solved to join us, despite his former hesitancy and the fears of his wife. He had marched with us to Orleans, but had then turned back, perhaps with the not unnatural fear of again falling into the hands of the English. This had happened to him at Agincourt, and only lately had he been released. Perhaps his fears were pardonable, and those of his wife more so. She had sought earnestly to hold him back from this new campaign, and, when she could not prevail with him, she had addressed herself to the Maid with tears in her eyes, telling her how long had been his captivity in England, and with how great a sum he had been ransomed. Why must he adventure himself again into danger? The Maid had listened to all with gentle sympathy. Though so fearless herself she was never harsh to those who feared, and the appeal of the Duchesse touched her.

"Fear nothing, Madame," she answered, "I will bring him back to you safe and sound. Only pray for him always—pray for us day and night. I will make his safety my special care. He shall return to you unharmed; but I pray you hinder him not from serving his country in this great hour of need."

So the Maid prevailed, and the Duc was entrusted with the command of the army, second only to the Maid herself, who was distinctly placed at the head of all, whose word was to be supreme; whilst the King's fiat went forth that no Council should be held without her, and that she was to be obeyed as the head in all things! And men like Dunois, La Hire, and the Chevalier Gaucourt heard this without a murmur! Think of it!—a campaign conducted by a girl of seventeen, who, until a few weeks before, had never seen a shot fired in her life! Ah, but all men remembered Orleans, and were not surprised at the King's decree.

As we marched along in close array, we gathered many recruits by the way, notwithstanding that we were in the territory which had submitted to the English rule. Knights and gentlemen flocked forth from many a château to join themselves to the army of the miraculous Maid, whilst humble peasants, fired by patriotism and zeal, came nightly into our camp seeking to be enrolled amid those who followed and fought beneath her banner.

And so for three days we marched, our ranks swelling, our hearts full of zeal and confidence, till news was brought us that the Duke of Suffolk, one of the bravest and most chivalrous of English knights and soldiers, had thrown himself and his followers into Jargeau, and was hastily fortifying it for a siege.

This news reached us at Orleans itself, whither we had returned in the course of our march, to be received with wild acclamations by the people there. So loving were the citizens, that they were loth indeed to see the Maid set forth upon any mission which threatened danger to herself or her army; and their protestations and arguments so wrought upon many of the generals and officers, that they united to beg her to remain inactive awhile and send to the King for fresh reinforcements before attempting any such arduous task.

The Maid listened with her grave eyes wide in amazement.

"You say this to me—here in Orleans! You who have seen what my Lord accomplished for us here! Shame upon you for your lack of faith—for your unworthy thoughts. We march for Jargeau at dawn to-morrow!"

Never before had we heard the Maid speak with quite such severity of tone and word. Her glorious eyes flashed with a strange lambent light. She looked every inch the ruler of men. All heads were bent before her. None dared speak a word to hinder her in her purpose.

The morrow saw us before Jargeau. Its walls were strong. It was well supplied with those great guns that belched forth fire and smoke, and scattered huge stone balls against any attacking force. But we had brought guns with us—great pieces of ordnance, to set against the city walls; and the Maid ordered these to be brought and placed in certain positions, never asking counsel, always acting on her own initiative, without hesitation and without haste, calm and serene, with that deep, far-seeing gaze of hers turned from her own position to the city and back again, as though she saw in some miraculous vision what must be the end of all this toil.

"Mort de Dieu!" cried La Hire, forgetting in his wonder the loyally kept promise to swear only by his bâton, "but the Maid has nothing to learn in the art of gunnery! Where hath she learnt such skill, such wisdom! We never had guns to place at Orleans! Where has the child seen warfare, that she places her artillery with the skill of a tried general of forces!"

Ah!—where had the Maid learned her skill in any kind of warfare? Had we not been asking this from the first? This was but another development of the same miracle. For my part I had ceased now to wonder at anything which she said or did.

At daybreak on the morrow the roar of battle began. The air was shaken by the crash and thunder of the guns from both sides. But it was

plain to all eyes how that the cunning disposition of our pieces, set just where they could deal most effectively with a weak point in the fortifications, or a gateway less capable than others of defence, were doing far more hurt to the enemy than their fire did to us. For the most part their balls passed harmlessly over our heads, and the clouds of arrows were for us the greater danger, though our armour protected us from over-much damage. But it was before Jargeau that the incident happened, which so many writers have told of the Maid and the Duc d'Alençon ; how that she did suddenly call to him, nay more, drew him with her own hand out of the place where he had stood for some time near to her, saying in a voice of warning, "Have a care, my lord, there is death at hand!" Another young knight boldly stepped into that very position from which she had snatched Alençon, and an instant afterwards his head was struck off by a cannon ball. The Maid saw and covered her eyes for a moment with her mailed hand.

"Lord have mercy on that brave soul!" she whispered, "but why did he not heed the warning?"

Well, the fighting round Jargeau was fierce and long; but the Maid with her standard held stubbornly to the place beside the wall which she had taken up, and at sight of her, and at the sound of her clear silvery voice, encouraging and commanding, the men came ever on and on, regardless of peril, till the scaling ladders were set, and at the breaches torn in the walls by the guns, our soldiers swarmed over into the town shouting with the shout of those with whom is the victory.

Again the Maid triumphed. Again the hearts of the English melted within them at the sight of the White Witch as they would tauntingly call her, even whilst they cowered and fled before her. The French were swarming into the city; the great gates were flung open with acclamations of triumph; and the Maid marched in to take possession, her white banner floating proudly before her, her eyes alight, her cheeks flushed.

One of the young gentlemen not long since added to her household, Guillame Regnault by name, from Auvergne, a very knightly youth, a favourite with us all, came striding up to the Maid, and saluting with deep reverence, begged speech with her. She was never too much occupied to receive those who came to her, and instantly he had her ear.

"My General," he said, "The Duke of Suffolk is close at hand. We pressed him hard, and it seemed as though he would die sword in hand, ere he would yield. But I did beg of him in his own tongue, with which I am acquainted, not to throw away his noble life; and he did look hard at me, pausing the while in thrust and parry, as all others did pause, for us to parley; and he said that he would give up his sword to THE MAID OF ORLEANS, and to none other. Whereupon I did tell him that I would run and fetch her to receive his submission, or take him to her myself. But then his mind did change, and he said to me, 'Are you noble?' I did tell him that my family was noble, but that I had not yet won my knighthood's spurs. Then forthwith did he uplift his sword, and I read his meaning in his eyes. I bent my knee, and there and then he dubbed me knight, and afterwards would have tendered me his sword, but I said, 'Not so, gentle Duke, but I hear by the sound of the silver trumpet that the Maid, our General, is close at hand. Suffer me to tell her of what has passed, and I trow that she will herself receive your sword at her hands.'"

"You did well, Sir Guillame," spoke the Maid, using the new title for the first time, whereat the youth's face kindled and glowed with pleasure. "Bring the Duke at once to me here. I will receive his surrender in person."

Truly it was a pretty sight to watch—the dignified approach of the stalwart soldier, tall, upright, a knightly figure in battered coat of mail, bleeding from several small wounds, but undaunted and undauntable, and the slim, youthful white figure, with uncovered head, and a face regal in its dignity, and yet so full of sweet courtesy and honourable admiration for a beaten, yet noble foe. He gazed upon her with a great wonder in his eyes, and then, dropping upon one knee, tendered his sword to her, which the Maid took, held in her hands awhile, deep in thought, and then, with one of her wonderfully sweet smiles, held out to him again.

"Gentle Duke," she said, "it hath been told me that you are known in France as the English Roland; and if so, I would be loth to deprive so noble a foe of his knightly weapon. Keep it, then, and all I ask of you is that you use it no more against the soldiers of France. And now, if you will let my gentlemen lead you to my tent, your hurts shall be dressed, and you shall receive such refreshment as your condition requires."

But I may not linger over every incident of that march, nor all the achievements of the Maid in the arts both of peace and of war. Towns and castles surrendered at her summons, or flung wide their gates at the news of her approach. Sometimes we fought, but more often the very

"FROM THE RENART GATE THERE ISSUED FORTH A GRAVE AND SUMPTUOUS PROCESSION."—(*p.* 400.)

sound of her name, or the sight of the white figure upon the great black horse was sufficient, and fortress after fortress upon the Loire fell before her, the English garrisons melting away or marching out, unable or unwilling to try conclusions with so notable a warrior, who came, as it were, in the power of the King of Heaven.

And not only did she achieve triumphs in war's domains; she was equally victorious as a promoter of peace. For when the news was brought to us that the Comte de Richemont, Constable of France, but hitherto inimical to the King, desired to join us with a body of men, the Duc d'Alençon would have sent him away with insult and refused his proffer of help; but the Maid, with her gentle authority and reasonable counsel, brought him to a different frame of mind, and the Constable was received with a fair show of graciousness. And although in the days which immediately followed his aid was not of great importance (for when France had the Maid to fight for her she wanted none beside), yet in the time to come, when she was no longer there to fight for the salvation of her country, De Richemont's loyal service to the King was of inestimable value, and had it not been for the Maid at this juncture, he might have been lost for ever to the French cause.

Her generosity shone out the more in that De Richemont was no friend to her; indeed he had regarded her as little better than a witch before he came under the magic of her personality. His greeting to her was rough and blunt.

"Maiden," he said, "they tell me that you are against me, and that you are a witch. I know not whether you are from God or not. If you are from Him, I do not fear you. If you are from the devil, I fear you still less."

She looked him full in the face, gravely at first, but with a smile kindling deep down in her eyes. Then she held out her hand in token of amity.

"Brave Constable, this is well spoken. You have no cause to fear me. You are not here by my will, it is true; for I have enough men with me to do the will of my Lord; but since you have come for love of the Dauphin, who soon must be crowned King, you are welcome indeed; and I know that you will live to serve him faithfully, though in the present you have foes at Court who turn his heart from you."

So again she saw what lay beyond our ken, and which the future has brought to light. Alas, that she never saw the day when the King threw off his supine fear and idleness, and played the man in the conquest of his kingdom, and when De Richemont fought like a lion at his side! Yet who dare say that she did not see and did not rejoice even then? If the light came only in gleams and flashes, surely it came to her charged with an infinite joy!

And now I must tell of the last exploit of this wonderful eight days' triumphal march through a hostile country—that battle of Patay, where, for the first time, the Maid met the foe in the open, and directed the operations not against stone walls, as in every case before, but against an army drawn up in a plain.

There had been marching and counter-marching which only a map could make clear. What matters it the route we pursued, so long only as our progress had been attended by victory, and the fortresses cleared of foes, so that the journey of the King could now be taken in safety? Yet there was one more peril to face; for the army so long expected, under Sir John Fastolfe, was now heard of somewhere close at hand. He had joined himself to Talbot, so it was rumoured, and now a great host was somewhere in our neighbourhood, ready to fall upon us if they could find us, and cut us to pieces, as they had done so often before – witness the fields of Crecy, Poictiers, and Agincourt!

For the first time there was uneasiness and fear in the ranks of the soldiers. They had infinite confidence in the Maid as a leader against stone walls, for had they not seen her take tower after tower, city after city? But she had never led them in the open field; and how could they expect to meet and triumph over the English, who had always vanquished them heretofore?

We knew not where the foe lay; all we knew was that it was somewhere close at hand; and strong grew the fear in the hearts of Alençon and many others, and they begged the Maid to fall back upon the camp at Beaugency, and to wait there for further reinforcements. But she shook her head with decision.

"Let us find them first, and then ride boldly at them. Be not afraid; they will not stand. My Lord will give us the victory!"

And how did we come upon them at last? Verily, by a mere accident. We were marching in good order towards the great plain of Beauce, which at this time of the year was so thickly overgrown with vineyards and cornfields that we saw nothing of any lurking foe; and I trow that we were not seen of them, although a great host was lying at ease in the noontide heat, watching for our coming, I doubt not; but not yet drawn up in battle array.

A stag, frightened by our approach, broke from

the thicket, and went thundering across the plain. All at once a shower of arrows let loose from English bows followed the creature's flight, together with eager shouts and laughter, betraying the presence of the unsuspecting foe. With a lightning swiftness the Maid grasped the whole situation. Here was an army, waiting to fight, it is true, but for the moment off its guard. Here were we, in order of march. One word from her, and our whole force would charge straight upon the foe!

And was that word lacking? Was there an instant's hesitation? Need such a question be asked of the Maid? Clear and sweet rose her wonderful voice, thrilling through the hot summer air.

"Forward, my children, forward, and fear not. Fly boldly upon them, and the day shall be yours!"

She charged, herself, at the head of one column; but La Hire, in the vanguard, was before her. With shouts of triumph and joy the old veteran and his followers thundered into the very midst of the startled English, and we followed in their wake.

The Duc d'Alençon rode beside the Maid. His face was pale with excitement—perhaps with a touch of fear. He remembered the fight at Agincourt, and the wound received there, the captivity and weary waiting for release.

"How will it end, my General, how will it end?" he said, and I heard his words and her reply, for I was riding close behind.

"Have you good spurs, M. le Duc?" she asked, with one flashing smile showing the gleam of white teeth.

"Ah Ciel!" he cried in dismay; "then shall we fly before them?"

"Not so," she answered; "but they will fly so fast before us that we shall need good spurs to keep up with them!"

And so, indeed, it was. Perhaps it was the sight of the *élan* of the French troops, perhaps the fear of the White Witch, perhaps because taken at unawares and in confusion, but the English for once made no stand. Fastolfe and his men, on the outer skirts of the force, rode off at once in some order, heading straight for Paris, but the braver and less prudent Talbot sought, again and again, to rally his men, and bring them to face the foe. But it was useless. The rout was utter and complete. They could not stand before the Maid; and when Talbot himself had fallen a prisoner into our hands, the army melted away and ran for its life, so that this engagement is called the "Chasse de Patay" to this day.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW THE MAID RODE WITH THE KING.

THUS the English were routed with great loss, their leading generals prisoners in the hands of the Maid, and the road for the King open, not to Rheims alone, but to the very walls of Paris, had he so chosen.

Indeed, there were those amongst us who would gladly and joyfully have marched under our great white banner right to the capital of the kingdom, and driven forth from it the English Regent and all the soldiers with him, whether Burgundians or those of his own nation. For Fastolfe was flying along the road which led him thither, and it would have been a joy to many of us to pursue, and overtake, to rout him and his army, or put them to the sword, and to march up beneath the walls of Paris itself, and demand its surrender in the name of the Maid!

Those there were amongst us who even came and petitioned of her to lead us thither, and strike a death blow, once and for all, against the power of the alien foe who had ruled our fair realm too long; but though her eyes brightened as we spoke, and though all that was martial in her nature responded to the appeal thus made to her—for by this time she was a soldier through every fibre of her being, and albeit ever extraordinarily tender towards the wounded, the suffering, the dying—be they friends or foes—the soldier-spirit within her burned ever higher and higher, and she knew in her clear head that, humanly speaking, we could embark upon such a victorious march as perchance the world has never seen before—certainly not beneath such a leader.

And yet she shook her head, even whilst her cheek flushed and her eyes sparkled. Little as the King had done to merit the deep devotion of such a nature as hers, the Maid's loving loyalty towards, and faith in, him never wavered. Although we all saw in him the idle, pleasure-loving, indolent weakling, which in those days he was, she could, or would, find no fault with him. Often as he disappointed her, she never ceased to love and honour him. Perchance it was given to her to see something of that manlier nature which must have underlaid even then that which we saw and grieved over. For she would hear no word against him. He was the centre and sun of her purpose, and her answer to us was spoken without hesitation.

"Nay, my friends, we have other work to do ere we may stand before the walls of Paris. The Dauphin must be brought to Rheims, and the

crown set upon his head; for thus hath my Lord decreed, and I may not act other than as my voices direct."

And when the Maid spoke thus, there was no contradicting or gainsaying her. We had such confidence in her by this, that whatever she did was right in our eyes. The soldiers would have followed her eagerly to the very walls of Paris; but at her command they turned back and marched with flags flying and music sounding back to the Court of the King, where news of the Chasse of Patay had already preceded us, and where a joyous welcome awaited our return, though even now there were sour and jealous faces amongst the nearest advisers of the King.

If you would believe it, they still opposed the journey of the King to Rheims, working on his fears, his irresolution, his indolence, and seeking to undermine the influence of the Maid, when she went personally to see him, that she might speak with him face to face. He himself had many excuses to offer.

"Sweet Chevalière," he would say, calling her by one of the names which circulated through the Court, "why such haste? Is it not time that you should rest and take your ease after your many and arduous toils? Think what you have accomplished in these few days! Flesh and blood cannot continue at such a strain. Let us now enjoy the fruits of these wonderful victories: let us feast and rejoice and enjoy a period of repose. Surely that is prudent counsel; for we must have care for our precious Maid, whom none can replace in our army, if she, by too arduous toil, should do herself an injury!"

But the Maid looked at him with her grave eyes full of earnest pleading and searching questioning.

"Gentle Dauphin, I beseech you speak not thus, nor think after such carnal fashion. Think of what your Lord and my Lord has done for you! Think of what hath been accomplished by Him since first it was given to me to look upon your face. Think what He hath decreed and what He hath already wrought for the furtherance of His purpose towards your Majesty and this realm! And shall His will be set aside? Shall we, His children, hang back and thwart Him, just in the hour when He has put the victory in our hands? Ah, sweet Dauphin, that would be shame, indeed! That would be pain and grief to Him. Cast away all such unworthy thought! Press on to the goal, now in sight! When you stand, crowned and anointed, King of France, you shall know the power wherewith you have been upheld, and lifted from the very mire of humiliation and disgrace!"

And at these words the Duc d'Alençon, who was by this an ardent believer in the Maid, and devotedly attached to her service, prostrated himself before the King, and cried:

"Sire, this Maid speaks words of wisdom. I pray your Majesty to give full heed to what she says. Had you watched her as I have done, had you marched with her and seen her in battle as well as in scenes of peace, you would know well that the power of God is with her. Fear not to do her bidding! Go forth as she bids. Let us hail you King of your fair realm, and then let the Maid lead us on to other and greater victories!"

We all joined our entreaties to that of the Duke. We marvelled how the King could be so blind. But whilst others spoke and urged him, whilst we saw the light kindle in the King's eyes, and knew that her words had prevailed with him, she stood apart as one who dreams; and over her face there stole a strange, pale shadow, unlike anything I had seen there before. She saw nothing of the scene about her; heard no word of what passed. I think she did not even know what was meant by the great shout which suddenly went up when the King arose and declared, once and for all, that his mind was made up, that he would march with the Maid to Rheims; that he would not be daunted by the fact that in Troyes and in Chalons English garrisons yet remained, which might give him trouble in passing. What the Maid had done before she could do again. All that hitherto she had promised had been fulfilled; the fear of her had fallen upon the English, and the terror of the English no longer weighed upon the spirits of the French. He would go, come what might. He would trust in the power of the Maid to finish that which she had begun.

The shouts and plaudits of the courtiers within the castle, and of the soldiers without, when this thing was known, was evidence enough of the confidence and enthusiasm which the exploits of the Maid had awakened. Not a soldier who had followed her heretofore but would follow her now, wherever she should lead them. Surely her heart must have swelled with joy and pride as she heard the clamour of frantic applause ringing through the place.

But when she was back in her own apartments, and I was able to approach her alone, I ventured to ask her something concerning her silence of a short time back.

I always think with a great pride and tender joy of the trust and friendship which the Maid reposed in me, thereby doing me a vast honour. I had often ridden beside her on our marches,

especially in the earlier days, when she had not so many to claim her words and counsels. Methinks she had spoken to Bertrand, to me, and to Sir Guy de Laval with more freedom respecting her voices and her visions than to any others, save, perhaps, the King himself, of whom she had ever said she had revelations for his ear alone. She would talk to us of things which for the most part she kept locked away in her own breast; and now when I did ask her what it was that had robbed her cheek of its colour, and wrapped her in a strange trance of grave musing, she passed her hand across her eyes, and then looked at me full, with a strange intensity of gaze.

"If I only knew! If I only knew myself!" she murmured.

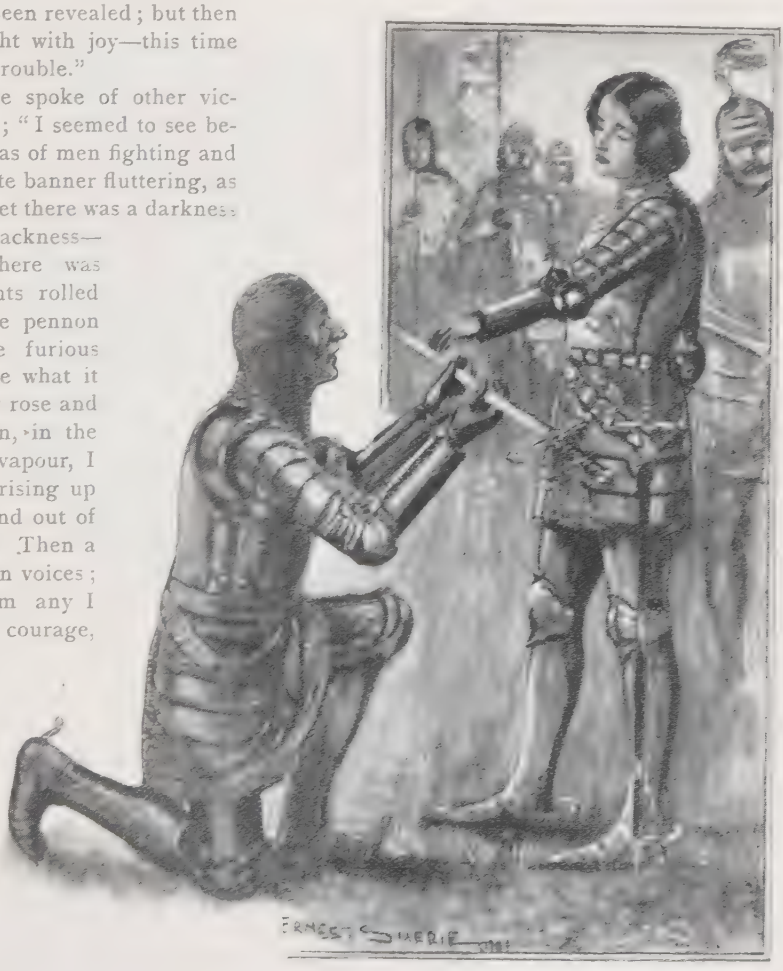
"Did your voices speak to you, mistress mine? I have seen you fall into such musing fits before this, when something has been revealed; but then your eyes have been bright with joy—this time they were clouded as with trouble."

"It was when the Duke spoke of other victories," she said, dreamily; "I seemed to see before me a great confusion as of men fighting and struggling. I saw my white banner fluttering, as it were, victoriously; and yet there was a darkness upon my spirit. I saw blackness—darkness — confusion; there was battle and strife—garments rolled in blood. My own white pennon was the centre of some furious struggle. I could not see what it was, waves of black vapour rose and obscured my view. Then, in the midst of the smoke and vapour, I saw a great pillar of fire, rising up as to the very sky itself, and out of the fire flew a white dove. Then a voice spoke—one of my own voices; but in tones different from any I have heard before—'Have courage, even to death, Jeanne,' it said, 'for we will still be with you.' Then everything faded once more, and I heard only the shouting of the people, and knew that the King had made his decision, and that he had promised to receive his crown, which has waited for him so long."

As she spoke these last words, the cloud seemed to lift. Her own wonderful smile shone forth again.

"If this be so, if, indeed, the Dauphin shall be made King, what matters that I be taken away? My work will end when the crown shall be set upon his head. Then, indeed, my soul shall say: 'Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace.'"

Her face was suddenly transfigured—radiant—with some great and glorious thought. I was glad at heart to see that the shadow had passed entirely away. Only for a moment could any presage of personal fear cloud the sweet serenity of the Maid's nature. And yet I went from her something troubled myself; for had I not reason to know what strange power she possessed of reading the future, and what did it mean, that con-



"THE DUKE GAZED UPON THE MAID WITH A GREAT [illegible] IN HIS EYES, THE DROPPING UPON [illegible]

fusion of battle, that intermingling of victory and defeat, that darkness of smoke and blaze of fire, and the white dove flying forth unscathed? I had heard too often the shouts of the infuriated English—"We will take you and burn you, you White Witch! You shall perish in the flames from whence the devil, your father, has sent you forth!"—not to hear with a shudder any vision of smoke and of fire. But again, had not the Maid ever prevailed in battle over her foes? Might she not laugh to scorn all such threats? Ah me! It is well that we may not read the future, else how could we bear the burden of life?

Joyous and triumphant was the day upon which, after some inevitable delays, we started forth—a goodly company in sooth—an army at our back, swelling with pride and triumph—to take our young King to the appointed place, and see the crown of France there set upon his head. From all quarters news was pouring in of the hopeless disruption of the power of the English after the Chasse de Patay. Towns and villages which had submitted in sullen acquiescence before, now sent messages of loyalty and love to the King. Men flocked daily to join our standard as we marched. It was a sight to see the villagers come forth, clad in their holiday dress, eager to see and pay homage to the King, but yet more eager to look upon the white mailed figure at his side and shout aloud the name of THE MAID OF ORLEANS!

For the place of honour at the King's right hand was reserved for the Maid, and she rode beside him without fear, without protest, without shame. Gentle, humble, and simple as she always was, she knew herself the Messenger of a greater King than that of France, and the honour done to her she accepted as done to her Lord, and never faltered beneath it, as she was never puffed up or made haughty or arrogant thereby. Nor did she ever lose her tenderness of heart, nor her quick observation of trivial detail in the absorbing interests of her greatness. She was the first to note signs of distress upon the part of the soldiers, during the march in the midsummer heat. It was she who would suggest a halt in the noontide, in some wooded spot, that "her children" might rest and refresh themselves, and it was she who, never tired herself, would go amongst them, asking them of their well-being, and bringing with her own hands some luscious fruit or some cooling draught to any soldier who might be suffering from the effects of the sun.

She who rode beside a King, who was the greatest and most renowned of that great company, would minister with her own hands to the humblest of her followers; and if ever King or Duke or courtier jested or remonstrated with her on the matter, her answer was always something like this:

"They are my own people. I am one of them. At home when any was sick in the village, I was always sent for. And wherefore not now? I am the same as I was then. Soon I shall be going back to them, my task accomplished. Wherefore should I not be their friend and sister still?"

Then all would laugh to think of the Maid of Orleans going back to take up the life of a peasant again at Domrémy; but the Maid's face would grow grave and earnest as she would make reply:

"Indeed, if my work for my King is accomplished, I would fain do so. I was so happy, so happy in my sweet home."

But now our triumphal march was suddenly brought to a halt; for we were approaching the town of Troyes—a place of ill-omen to France, and to the young King in particular, for there the shameful treaty was signed which robbed him of his crown; and great was the dissension amongst the King's counsellors as to what should be done. The place was strong, the English garrison there large. A summons to surrender sent on in advance had been ignored, and now came the question—should the army pass on its way to Rheims leaving this place in the rear unattacked and untaken, or should it run the risk of a long delay, and perhaps some peril and loss in attempting to reduce it?

La Hire and Dunois spoke out insistently. At all costs the town must be taken. It would be folly and madness to leave such a stronghold of the enemy in the rear. Other places had fallen before the victorious Maid, and why not this? The army would go anywhere with her. The soldiers only desired to be told what she counselled, and to a man they would support her. They had lost all fear of the foe, if only the Maid led them into battle, whether in the open or against massive walls. But as usual the King's nearest counsellors were all for delay, for avoiding battle, for retreat rather than risk. The Archbishop of Rheims, instead of being eager to push on to the place which as yet was only his in name, for he had never been aught but titular Archbishop as yet, was always one with La Tremouille in advising caution and a timid policy. Both were the enemies of the Maid, jealous of her gifts, and of her influence with the King, and fearful lest her power over him should grow and increase. They even plotted that she should be excluded from the council now sitting anent this very matter, and it

was only when the King and the Duc d'Alençon growing restless and impatient at her absence, desired her presence instantly, that she was sent for.

There was a grave dignity about her as she entered, which sat impressively upon her young face, so fair and sweet and gentle. She knew that timid counsels were being held, and that she, the Commander-in-Chief of the army, was being set aside—the Messenger from the Lord was being ignored. Not for herself, but for Him was her spirit moved.

The Archbishop with much circumlocution told her of the difficulty in which the King's Council was placed, and would have discoursed for long upon the situation, only that in his first pause the Maid spoke, addressing herself to the King.

"Shall I be believed if I speak my counsel?" she asked.

"You will be believed according as you speak," answered the King, thoroughly uneasy, as he ever was, when torn in twain by the multitude of counsellors with whom he must needs surround himself, though his heart ever inclined towards the Maid.

"I speak that which my Lord gives me to speak," she answered, her wonderful eyes full upon the King. "Shall I be believed?"

"If you speak that which is reasonable and profitable, I will certainly believe you," he answered, still uneasy beneath her look.

"Shall I be believed?" she questioned a third time, and there was a fire in her eyes which seemed to leap out and scathe the pusillanimous monarch as he sat quaking in his Council.

"Speak, Maiden," he cried out then, "I at least will believe!"

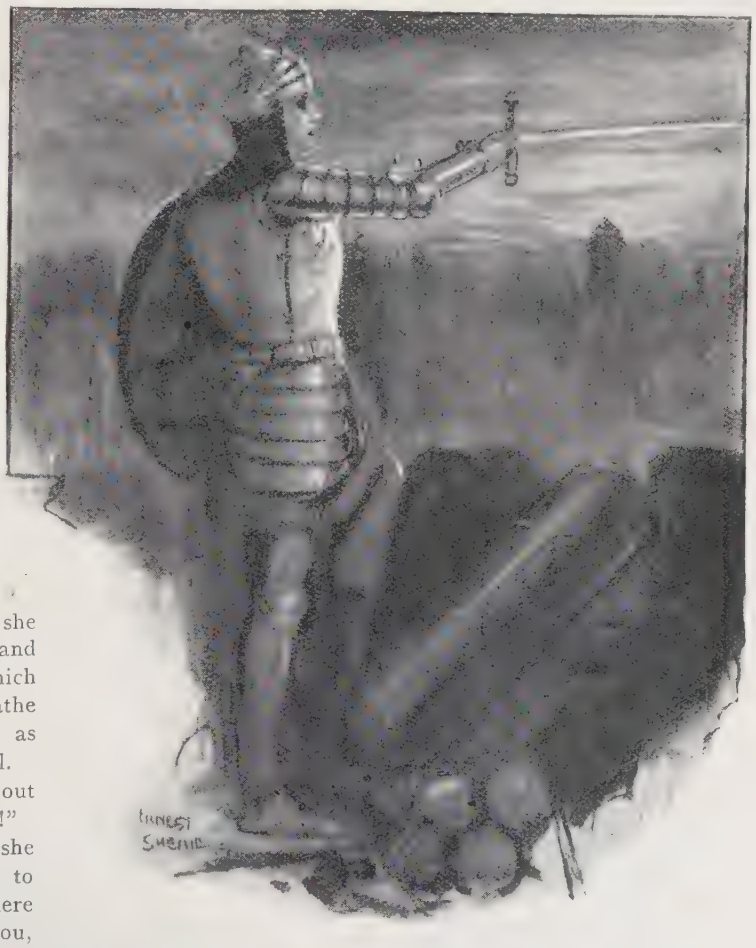
"Then, noble Dauphin," she cried, "order your army to assault this city of Troyes, where such despite has been done you, and hold no more councils; for my Lord has told me that within three days I shall lead you into the town, and false Burgundy and proud England shall there be overthrown!"

"Pouf!" cried the Chancellor, one of the Maid's worst foes, "if there was a chance of doing such a thing in six days we would willingly wait; but——"

He stopped suddenly—none knew why, save that the Maid's eyes were fixed full upon him, and in those eyes was that strange shining light which some of us knew so well. She did not speak to him, but when his voice suddenly wavered and broke, she addressed herself to the King, speaking as one who repeats a message.

"You shall be master of the city of Troyes, noble Dauphin, not in six days—but to-morrow."

And even as she spoke, without waiting for other command, she turned and went forth, walking with her head well up, and her eyes fixed



"AS THE FIRST MYSTIC GLOW OF THE SUMMER'S DAWN KINDLED IN THE SKY, THE MAID STOOD, A WHITE LUMINOUS FIGURE, HER DRAWN SWORD IN HER HAND, POINTING FULL IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CITY."—(*p.* 414).

straight before her, yet as one who walks in sleep, and pays no heed to what lies before him. She called for her horse, and leaping into the saddle, rode out bare-headed in the summer sun to the camp where the soldiers lay, in doubt and wonderment at this delay; and as they sprang up to a man at sight of her, and broke into the acclamations which always greeted her appearance amongst them, she lifted up her clear ringing voice and cried:

"Be ready, my children, against the morrow, confess your sins, make your peace with God and man. For to-morrow He will lead you victorious into yonder frowning city, and not a hair of your heads shall suffer!"

They crowded about her, filling the air with shouts of triumph; they clamoured to be led at once against the grim frowning walls. I verily believe had she put herself at their head then and there, that nothing could have withstood the *élan* of their attack; but the Maid received her orders from a source we knew not of, and fleshly pride never tempted her to swerve from the appointed path. She smiled at the enthusiasm of the men, but she shook her head gently and firmly.

"Do my bidding, my children, confess yourselves and pray till set of sun. Then I will come to you and set you your appointed tasks, and to-morrow I will lead you into the city!"

That night there was no sleep for the Maid or for her soldiers. At no time was it dark, for midsummer was over the land, and the moon hung in the sky like a silver lamp when the sun had set. The Maid came forth as she had said with the last of the daylight, and at her command a great mound was speedily raised, of earth, brushwood, faggots, stones—anything that the soldiers could lay hands upon; and when this great mound was of height sufficient to satisfy the young General, the great guns were brought and set upon it in such masterly fashion, and in such a commanding way, that La Hire, Dunois and Xantrailles, who came to see, marvelled at it, and we could note from the top of this earthwork that within the city great commotion reigned, and that it was as busy as a hive that has been disturbed.

As the first mystic glow of the summer's dawn kindled in the eastern sky, the Maid stood, a white luminous figure in full armour, poised lightly on the top of one of our pieces of ordnance, her drawn sword in her hand, pointing full in the direction of the city.

I have heard since from those within that the anxious garrison and citizens saw this motionless figure, and cried aloud in terror and awe. To them it seemed as though St. Michael himself had come down to fight against them, and terror stricken they ran to the governors of the city and implored that surrender might be made, ere the heavens opened and rained lightnings down upon them.

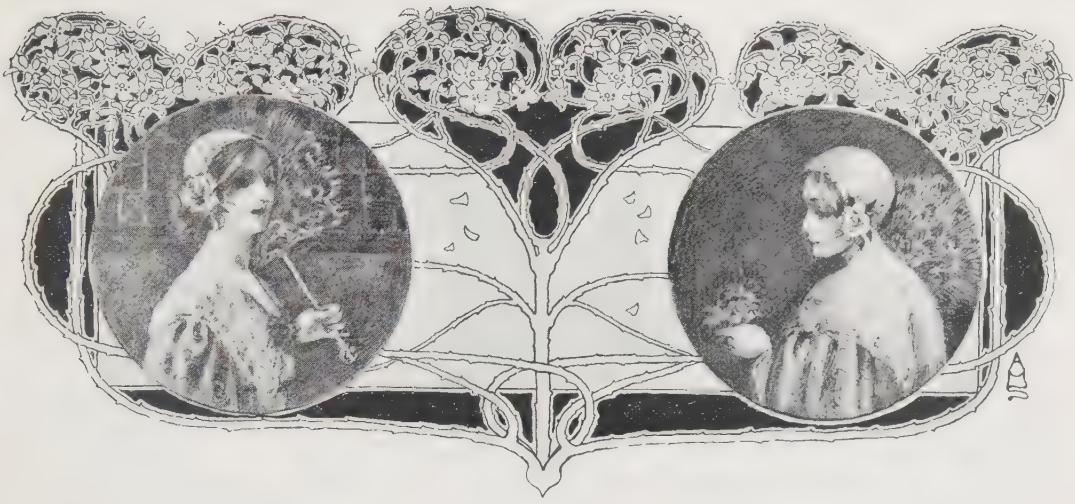
And thus it came about that ere the dawn had fairly come, an embassy was sent to the King, and terms of surrender offered. The King, from motives of policy or fear, the Maid, from pity and generosity, accepted the messengers graciously, and granted the garrison leave to depart with their horses and their arms, if the town were peacefully given up; and thus it came about that after the King had finished his night's slumber, and the Maid had done her gracious part in redeeming and releasing the French prisoners, which, but for her, would have been carried away by the retiring English and Burgundians, she rode beside the King, and at the head of the cheering and tumultuous army into the city of Troyes, which had surrendered to the magic of her name without striking a blow.

"O my Chevalière," cried the happy and triumphant monarch, as he turned to look into her grave serene face. "What a wonderful Maid you are! Stay always with me, Jeanne, and be my friend and General to my life's end."

She looked at him long and earnestly as she made answer.

"Alas, Sire, it may not be! For a year—perhaps for a year. But I shall last no longer than that."

(*To be concluded.*)



The Children's Hour.

The subject of the drawing illustrating Longfellow's poem which is our Frontispiece this month.

LONGFELLOW'S love for the children was very great. He was always singing of the little ones, of their thoughts and their dreams. They were to him the link between the world of poetry and the work-a-day world. They were "better than all the ballads." The Children's Hour is the hour between the dark and the daylight, the hour of peace and of relaxation.

Between the dark and the daylight,
When the night is beginning to lower,
Comes a pause in the day's occupations
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me
The patter of little feet,
The sound of a door that is opened,
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,
Descending the broad hall stair,
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence;
Yet I know by their merry eyes
They are plotting and planning together
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway!
A sudden raid from the hall!
By three doors left unguarded
They enter my castle wall!

They climb up into my turret
O'er the arms and back of my chair;
If I try to escape they surround me;
They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,
Their arms about me entwine,
Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen,
In his Mouse-Tower on the Rhine!

Do you think, O blue-eyed Banditti,
Because you have scaled the wall,
Such an old mustache as I am
Is not a match for you all!

I have you fast in my fortress,
And will not let you depart,
But put you down into the dungeon
In the round-tower of my heart.

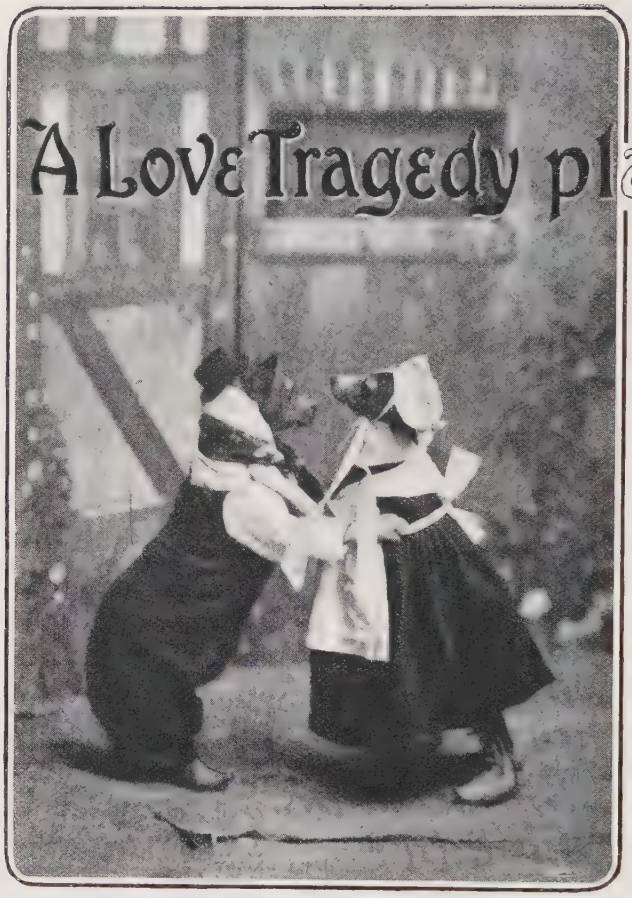
And there I will keep you for ever,
Yes, for ever and a day,
Till the walls shall crumble to ruin
And moulder in dust away!

—*Longfellow.*

A Love Tragedy played by Dogs

BY WILLIAM G. FITZGERALD.

Illustrated from special photographs by RUSSELL & SONS, *Baker St.*



THE LOVERS MEET CLANDESTINELY.

They rub noses, put their paws on one another's shoulders, and spend some time whispering and waltzing about.

WE have all seen animal entertainments, and have probably been struck by their monotony. The dancing elephant; the seal with cymbals attached to its flappers; the cockatoo that hops nimbly through a fiery ring; the scared and unwilling cat that walks the tight-rope; the pony, bear, and lion, that wrestle with their trainer; and the dog that does every conceivable thing, from turning a somersault at the word of command to thought-reading with cards.

Nothing is more difficult than to design new "business" in dog shows, but it remained for Mr. E. Mérian to plan something entirely new, and he is now reaping the fruits of his ingenuity in the shape of a salary exceeding £50 per week.

For many years Mr. Mérian trained dogs, cats, elephants, and other animals for performers who figured as "trainers" themselves, but it was not until quite recently that he came forward as a showman, bringing to bear all the ingenuity accumulated during many years as an animal trainer for others. A whole book might be written about Mr. Mérian's experiences as an animal trainer, but I must here content myself with one episode. Mr. Mérian had a troupe of twelve boar hounds, who—though they went through their performance well enough—were a constant source of anxiety, and even danger, by reason of their ferocity. After many nerve-destroying fights between themselves and with human beings, their trainer resolved one night at the Eden Theatre, in Milan, that nothing untoward should happen, and to this end he engaged twelve stalwart Italians, one man to seize each dog at the close of the show. This was done, and the huge brutes were marched out in Indian file, each with his guardian. The audience had scarcely left, however, before the last dog in the line made a grab at the dog in front of him, and in a twinkling the twelve stalwarts had disappeared, and were looking down with interest from the fire ladders on the terrific combat which was

"AH ME! THANK GOODNESS, THE PARTING IS NOT FOR LONG."

The maiden, having parted with her lover for a little time, re-enters the house to prepare for flight.

now raging between all twelve of the fierce hounds. There was nothing to be done except for the unfortunate trainer himself to dash into the midst of the ferocious creatures, and a second or two later the mass of dogs and Mr. Mérian went rolling headlong down a staircase at the back of the stage. No one came to his rescue, and he had to seize each dog in turn, drag it away, chain it up, and then return for the next.

HEARING THE PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED SIGNAL, THE LADY COMES TO THE WINDOW TO GREET HER LOVER.

His clothing hung in rags, and was drenched with blood. When the last fighting couple, one of them with seventeen wounds, were separated, Mr. Mérian fainted away, and, all danger being over, the twelve stalwart Italians aforesaid nobly came to his rescue.

Mr. Mérian has trained every sort of dog, from a tiny Maltese, no bigger than one's hand, right up to a spotted boar-hound weighing more than 220 lbs., and standing over six feet six inches when rearing up on his hind legs. The latter cost £75.

The trainer is a Swiss, from Bremgarten, near Zurich, and knowing what a fortune there

lay in a novel dog show, he conceived the idea of inducing dogs to be dressed up as actors, and play a regular love drama, with scenery, and a coherent and simple thread of story running through it.

"It was like this," he told a representative of this magazine, "I noticed that everywhere in Switzerland, lovers came to pay court to their sweethearts under the window, and gradually the idea of a dog love-drama took shape in my mind. At first the grand finale took the form of a great fire in the house, but the dog actors had a rooted antipathy to this, and so I had to abandon it. Another difficulty was the clogs—or *sabots* —on the dogs' feet. I get them from Holland. There is a great knack in fastening these on, as otherwise the canine 'actors' cannot maintain an upright position.

"Don't run away with the idea that every dog will walk readily on his hind legs for considerable distances. I tell you that each individual dog must have his personal peculiarities studied, for some are fitted for one trick, and others for another. Some are dull, others bright and clever, just like human beings."

There can be no doubt that this love tragedy —as played by the poodle and the fox terriers— is one of the cleverest, as assuredly it is one of the funniest, spectacles ever seen on a stage. As the curtain goes up one sees a Swiss village in miniature, with the majestic Bernese Alps in the background, glistening with glaciers. On the left is a particularly inviting little cottage, or *châlet*. There are many others, all nicely timbered, and with imitation stones resting on their roofs in the most approved Swiss manner. In the foreground is a regular farmyard, with the funniest of mechanical cocks, calves, and other creatures. The cocks crow, and the calves bleat, all by means of the person of the indefatigable trainer, who simulates these rural sounds from behind the scenes.

It is a scene of great animation, and perky little milkmaids run backwards and forwards with milk pails, to the great delight of the audience, for these milkmaids are dogs, with mincing gait and pattering Dutch clogs. They seem full of importance, and are entering and disappearing in constant succession, and with a variety of attractive "toilettes." Suddenly there is a hush, and the most attractive of all the milkmaids hops out of the little *châlet* on the left, with an excruciating gait. You can tell she is doing something surreptitiously, for she looks fearfully round every few steps. She ignores the pretty church in the background, where an industrious dog sexton in funny trousers is tugging at the bell, to call canine worshippers to vespers; she appears only to realise that night is falling fast, the glaciers disappearing, and the weird Alpenglow stealing over the Eiger and the Jungfrau.

A moment later a second pattering of clogs is heard, and her secret lover trots up to her with every appearance of delight. He is obviously an "undesirable," and you realise at once that her father entertains powerful objections to him; hence the clandestine meeting. The lovers kiss—or rather rub noses—put their paws on one another's shoulders, and spend some time whispering and waltzing round in a way that moves the spectator to convulsions of mirth.

They are evidently plotting something, for the undesirable one, after an affectionate farewell, hops swiftly across the stage, and ensconces himself artfully behind a "property" tree. The maiden, with a killing gesture, puts up her "hand" and pushes back her cap, revealing a delightful and intelligent head. She then enters the *châlet*, lingering for a moment at the door, as though sighing, and saying "Ah me! thank goodness, the parting is not for long." Then, with a coquettish arranging of her pinafore, she enters the house. A moment or two later an imposing and formidable personage opens the door, and comes out—none other than her father, a large and imposing gentleman in a loud check suit, and with the unmistakable tail of a black French poodle protruding incongruously behind. He is a fierce-looking father, and indeed, Mr. Mérian assured me that he was a terror to idle admirers at railway stations and elsewhere. He makes his way across the stage with fierce glances, and you can tell he is going over to the "Bier-Halle" for a mug of lager.

Every step of his aggressive march is watched by the artful "undesirable" behind the tree. The father enters the pretty little inn, but

THE LOVER CLIMBS INTO THE ROOM OF HIS LADY LOVE FOR THE STOLEN INTERVIEW; THE FATHER, IN THE DOORWAY, CONGRATULATES HIMSELF ON THE TERRIBLE AWAKENING THE LOVERS WILL HAVE.

evidently suspects something, for a second or two after he closes the inn door, he opens a little window, and, after a thoughtful pull at his beer jug, puts it down and grimly sets himself to keep watch.

The lover, thinking the coast clear, cautiously emerges from behind the tree, and walks swiftly and steadily towards the house. It is amazing, by the way, how these dog actors maintain an upright position on two legs for so long; and also how their gestures, movements and air appear to suggest exactly the right sentiment. I think this is not so much due to actual training, as to careful selection of the most appropriate "actor" for the part.

The lover goes round to the window where he sees a light, and then halts. There is a moment of silence, and then a very funny thing happens—a low cautious whistle is repeated two or three times, in a way that sends the audience into roars of laughter. Of course, the whistle is done by the trainer behind the scenes. Hearing the previously arranged signal, the "lady" comes to the window, with her bonnet tastefully arranged. The whistles, however, have decided the watching father in the bier-halle across the way that things have gone far enough, and, grimly wiping his snout with the back of his paw he emerges from the inn, with the light of vengeance in his intelligent eye. He marches softly across towards the *châlet*, and arrives at the door just as the lover makes a tremendous bound, and climbs half way into the room of his lady-love, for the stolen interview. The triumphant father pauses a moment in the doorway congratulating himself on the

THE LOVER IS STIFF AND DEAD; HIS DISTRACTED SWEETHEART BENDS OVER HIM SOBBING, WHILE THE TERRIBLE FATHER STANDS UNREPENTANT IN THE DOORWAY.

terrible awakening which that lover will presently have.

The old fellow listens at the door for a moment, and then thumps loudly—in itself the funniest and most unexpected proceeding you ever saw. On this there is great confusion in the house. The dog father in the check suit outside suddenly grows terribly excited, and breaks down the door; then there is a fearful scene inside, which the horrified spectator can only dimly imagine. There are cries and shrieks and barkings, followed by the ringing report of a shot, and suddenly one is horrified to see—first the daughter rush out distractedly, then the lover, evidently severely wounded. This last intelligent creature staggers delightfully, and then falls, rolling over once or twice, with his forelegs up in the quaintest way imaginable. Suddenly he stiffens himself out, whereupon his distracted sweetheart bends over him and sobs and weeps bitterly, whilst that terrible father stands unrepentant and triumphant in the doorway. His triumph does not last long, however, for a big policeman comes on the scene, tunic'd and helmeted, and when this alert and intelligent officer has grasped the situation he blows a shrill call on his whistle (through Mr. Mérian behind the scenes) and a huge St. Bernard comes on and arrests the murderer. The curtain falls just as the bloodthirsty parent is being removed, his daughter being too much engrossed in her grief over her lover's body to notice her father's serious position in the eyes of the law.

The whole drama is a veritable triumph of training, and it is no wonder that at the close of each representation the "actors" should be regaled with a noble banquet of beef cheek, with rice, carrots, turnips, and cabbage.

In private life the "principal lady" is the brightest and cleverest-looking little fox terrier you ever saw, whilst her "father" is a poodle of uncertain temper, liable to get his owner into trouble at all times.

The murderous "father" however enacts a rôle unknown to the audience, namely that of valet to his master of a morning. He is trained to call Mr. Mérian at a certain hour, and bring him his clothes, one article after another. A waggish valet is this "heavy" canine tragedian in more senses than one, and often he will deliberately hide one sock, or one boot, and after making a great show of hunting for it, will at length pretend to find it, and be immensely pleased with himself.

The dog actors' wardrobe is designed entirely by the trainer, and all garments and "properties" are made under his supervision. He is firmly of the opinion that the dogs thoroughly and intelligently understand the love-drama they play so charmingly.

Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY'S NEW SERIAL STORY.

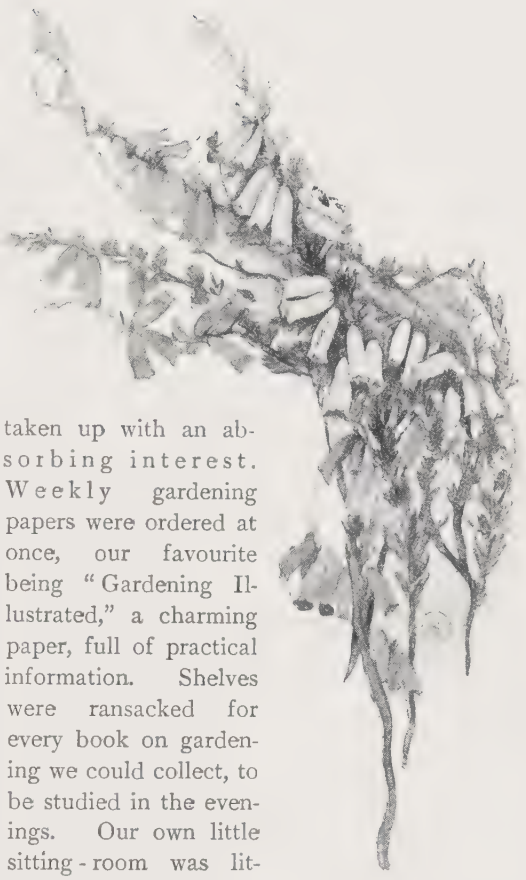
The Author of "Rhoda" has produced a beautiful and powerful work.

A delightful story by Mrs. De Horne Vaizey, the author of "Rhoda," will begin in the May number of "THE GIRL'S REALM." It is a tale of to-day; one that could not relate to any other epoch, and it is essentially girlish. It tells, with much liveliness and the tenderest sympathy, of the difficulties and the enjoyment attending the efforts of a family of girls—left without father or mother, and with only a small legacy—to win their way to the position to which their varied talents entitle them. The story, which is called "The Daughters of a Genius," is enlivened by many scenes of humour and adventure. The characters, including the two interesting brothers, are varied, they are strongly contrasted and clearly drawn. The story is worthy of the pen that gave us "Rhoda." The illustrations will, we think, add greatly to the enjoyment of the story.

A Year's Practical Gardening.

HOW TWO GIRLS DID THE WORK OF A HEAD GARDENER.

BY ONE OF THEM.



Our head gardener was leaving! A momentous occurrence, and one which, to my sister and myself, opened out vistas of delight in the shape of cherished gardening plans, hitherto snubbed, at length with a chance of being realised. We were confident we could, as head gardeners, transform the flower garden into unrivalled masses of colour, and the kitchen garden was to become, under our supervision, the most prolific in the country. The question was, could we impress this view upon our parents? The operation, I am bound to say, took time. My father, indulgent to a fault, evidently thought this was going a little too far. The garden was satisfactorily worked (to his mind) by three men, but would it be so satisfactory when one of them was represented by his two daughters, the eldest nineteen, and myself a year younger, and both with very little practical experience? He shook his head. What would the undermen think of it? Where were his bedding plants to come from, and who would provide those tender little foliage plants necessary for the carpet beds in front of the house? What about pruning the roses and fruit trees? And then the vegetables? In our enthusiasm over the flowers, beans and peas would be forgotten, and I am sure in his mind's eye, instead of his garden he saw Sahara, sprinkled with a few sickly plants vainly trying to struggle against neglect and ill-treatment! On the other hand *our* mind's eye saw that desert "blooming like the rose." My mother wondered what fate was in store for her palms and stove plants, and with gentle irony suggested their being supplied for the house by the local nurseryman when the present stock died out, which fairly put us on our mettle.

Eventually we won the day, or, rather, were allowed to win it. And then began the most delightful and enthralling time, wholly taken up with an absorbing interest. Weekly gardening papers were ordered at once, our favourite being "Gardening Illustrated," a charming paper, full of practical information. Shelves were ransacked for every book on gardening we could collect, to be studied in the evenings. Our own little sitting-room was littered with nurserymen's catalogues. In fact, we lived, fed, and slept on gardening. Years after we realised how intolerably tiresome we must have been to the many people who have no passion for horticulture. No doubt we overdid it. Nothing could justify our neglect of every social and domestic duty. We refused all forms of entertainment; dinner-parties in the country our souls abhorred; and a chance of sleeping late and not being out before breakfast made balls impossible. In vain my mother used to send out word that Mrs. So-and-So had called, and wanted to see us; would we come in? The answer went back that we should be delighted to see Mrs. So-and-So in the potting shed. We have even received visitors in the mushroom cellar.

But, selfish as it now appears, and no doubt was, I do not entirely regret it. It laid the foundation of what has since become a very real and constant pleasure in my life, and I

have found that the year's experience of practical gardening, not only ordering and watching the different operations, but actually carrying them out myself, has been more help to me than all the volumes written on the subject. For girls there is no more delightful pursuit, and I like to think that most of them, who have the opportunity, know at least something of it. While to those who are really keen about it I say, choose any department of it you may fancy, and study it thoroughly. If your garden is of many acres, and more greenhouses; if gardeners abound in it, ruled over by an awe-inspiring person to whom you feel you ought to apologise for every flower you gather, then I am afraid you must give up the idea of being allowed to share in any of its responsibilities. This, to my mind, is one of the drawbacks of a very large garden. But with a little judicious management you will probably be allowed a plot of good, well-fed ground, and if less than an hour a day is set apart to tend it, it is wonderful what results can be achieved.

Perhaps you will fill it, as I should, if funds permit, with tea roses, with choice carnations to carpet the ground, and narcissus bulbs planted deep underneath, to make a brave show in spring. Or you may choose to grow the countless lovely annuals, and so make different effects every year. If there is a trellis or paling to back your plot, you have a chance of growing some of the many beautiful climbers —roses, clematis, and jasmine, the chief to my thinking. Sweet peas there must always be, and perhaps a few of Eckford's newest ones may be tried every year.

But to return to our "muttons." Our reign as head gardeners began late in January, the most important time of year, when seed time commences. Our kitchen garden was the true old-fashioned walled square, three sides covered with fruit trees, and along the top wall facing south ran lean-to greenhouses, a vine-house at one end, and at the other a show-house for flowers; the middle was a cool orchard-house planted with peaches and nectarines, and with shelves for the forced strawberries. In front of the greenhouses were some frames for violets, etc., also the small stove-house, where those palms for the drawing-room were to be nourished with so much care. Then came a broad gravel path, with an herbaceous border, backed by an espalier of fruit trees, and beyond, the ground which was to grow the best vegetables in the country. Mention must be made of the potting shed, that delightful resort, where so many thrilling hours were spent. It was high and airy, and deliciously cool in the hot summer days. We insisted on its being kept fairly tidy, and the seed hampers and large flower pots turned upside down made excellent seats for our occasional visitors. Here all the boxes of seeds were sown, the peas to be brought on under glass before planting out, the carpet-bedding plants, and an endless supply of different lobelias, of which my father was particularly fond.

The flower garden fell away from the house towards the south in a sloping lawn, with trees here and there; one of them a dear old mulberry, with trails of honeysuckle hanging from it. There were shrubberies on each side, with herbaceous borders, and round a corner to the right you came on a broad terrace, bordered with rose beds. Then sloping grass banks led on to the tennis and croquet lawns, and below all, through the big elms in the pasture fields beyond, you caught sight of the Thames, shining like a silver streak in the far distance.

We were fortunate in the two men under us. One was an old man, who had known us from childhood, and had always been our devoted slave. He was not much of a gardener, except as regards digging, mowing the lawns, and keeping paths and edgings tidy. In an unguarded moment we once left to him the sowing of some vegetable marrows in pots, quite the simplest operation. But when they should have been appearing there was still nothing to be seen but brown earth. We inquired what had happened, and he seemed quite hurt. "Well, miss, I've bin a-lookin' and a-lookin', and ther don't seem to be n'ere a marrer." Nor was there even a seed, for he had forgotten to sow them! The other man was young, but had a good deal of experience. We were rather doubtful how he would appreciate our rule, but as he had suffered much

under the late tyrant, sometimes confiding to us his woes on the subject, we felt confident of getting on with him. He had the management of a vinery in his last place, so, as we were absolutely ignorant of grape-growing, and not much drawn to the subject, we gave up the vine-house entirely to him. To him, also, we entrusted the ordinary sowing of vegetables in the open ground, impressing upon him the necessity of having a constant succession of peas, broad and kidney beans, and lettuces. Instead of three or four rows of peas being sown almost at the same time, as is done in so many gardens, the third and succeeding rows, when gathered, being about the size and consistency of marbles, we intended to have a row sown every week or ten days, and to be able to send young, tender peas into the house from the first gathering until the end of October. Why most gardeners should consider that peas are over by August I never can imagine, when by sowing in trenches, in which three or four inches of manure has been buried, and giving water occasionally, they can be continued far into the autumn. In a dry season all late sowings are best done in this manner. The trenches, besides economising the water, protect the young plants from full exposure to the sun.

February was a wonderfully mild month, and we were tempted to try many sowings in the open, which we regretted when the frosts of March were upon us. But now-a-days, when seeds are so cheap, it is quite worth while to risk it. We were busy, at first, pruning the rose bushes, one of my favourite tasks. Hybrid perpetuals require a good deal of the knife, but for all teas and noisettes much pruning is a great mistake, and you lose many flowers thereby. Most of them make splendid climbers, and, when planted on the house, to cut back the branches you are longing to see covering the wall would be the last thing to think of. Why, then, do so when they are growing as bushes in a bed? They are much prettier supported by a rough stake, and allowed to grow as they will; and when you cut the long flowering branches in summer to put in water, you will be doing all the pruning that is necessary.

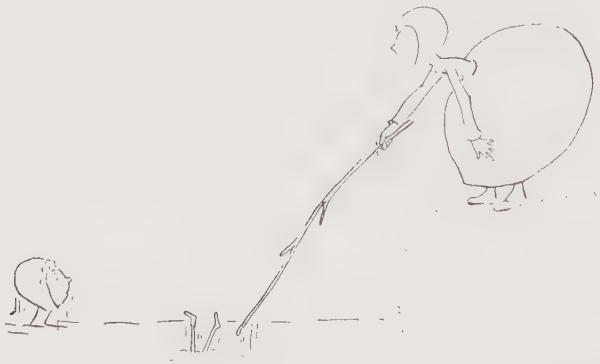
Towards the end of the month we were hard at work sowing flowers in boxes for the hot beds: begonias, carnations, Drummond's phlox, scabious, verbena, and many others, all to be planted out later on; also those carpet-bedding plants which we had pledged our word about. The hot-beds were our special care, as so much depended on them. Every evening the lights must be closed and covered up in good time; every morning, when the sun has any power, they must be opened early to bring down the temperature, or you may find all your seedlings frizzled to death. And thereby hangs a tale, and our pride took a heavy fall. For one morning in March, just when our boxes were shooting with specks of green, and we were congratulating ourselves on the promise of success, a time-honoured and long-absent guest arrived on a visit, and chose to drive up to the door at the inconsiderate hour of eight a.m. His appearance was hailed with delight. In the scrimmage of greetings, breakfast, and the endless questions and answers, our hot-beds, I am ashamed to say, were forgotten. And the sun, meanwhile, was shining in his strength. At 9.30, as breakfast was nearly over, suddenly interrupting an interesting story with a piercing shriek, my sister flew from the room. Understanding only too well, I rushed after her. We reached the hot-beds together, and as we tore down the lights a horrid sight presented itself. Of our tender green shoots there remained only small brownish leaves cooked to a turn! All in one bed were ruined, but in the other, which was close to the wall, and still partly shaded from the sun, most of the boxes were saved. Words failed us, and to make matters worse, we could see the two gardeners bending over their work with ill-concealed smiles. But it was no use crying over spilt milk. Fortunately, to be on the safe side, we had sown a good deal more than necessary; but the losses must be made good, and we set to work at once to sow afresh. The plants would not be so well grown when planted out, but they would be better than nothing; and, anyhow, with the extra care we should bestow on them, and pricking them out in good time, we intended them to be quite as good as they had ever been in former seasons. I shall not easily forget the chaff we lived through over what everyone was pleased to call our "cooking operations"!

(To be concluded in our April issue.)

Good Elizabeth and Bad Anna.

ELIZABETH was a Good little girl,
And Anna was very Bad:
"Elizabeth," said Anna,
In an aggravating manner,
"I shall throw your dolly into the stream
And she will be drowned—how sad!"

Despite Elizabeth's cries and moans,
Into the stream it flew:
"Elizabeth," said Anna,
In a tantalising manner,
"There goes your dolly!"—when, behold!
Anna tumbled in too!



The stream was deep, the bank was steep,
And Anna was quite immersed,
"Oh, save me, please!" cried Anna,
In a choking, bubbling manner,
But Elizabeth said, as she cut a stick,
"I shall save my dolly first!"

Elizabeth was a Dry little girl,
And Anna was very Wet,
Elizabeth said to Anna
In a most superior manner,
"Another time you'll be good, like me,
Such lessons we don't forget!"

SYBIL REID.

How Mamie Scattered the Wolves.

By Mrs. GEORGE CORBETT.

Illustrated by B. E. MINNS.

CHAPTER I.

"GOOD-BYE, my dear ones! I shall be back as soon as I can. May God protect you all during my absence!"

So spoke Alexander Stroboleff, who was about to proceed to Irkutsk, to exchange a sledge-load of choice furs for provisions and other household necessaries. There was ample need for him to dread being away from his family just now, for the winter was even more severe than usual, so both marauders and wild beasts were proportionately plentiful and daring. Madame Stroboleff would fain have postponed her husband's journey until the spring, when travelling would be safer. But a fresh supply of many things was absolutely indispensable, and as Mr. Stroboleff had often gone over exactly the same ground in weather quite as cold as the present, there really seemed no adequate reason for neglecting his duty.

The moment of parting had now arrived, and both Madame Stroboleff and her two children tried to be as cheerful as possible, so that father might not carry a picture of melancholy faces away with him. He kissed them all tenderly, and then got into the sledge which Peter had in readiness, just outside the wide gate which was the only opening in the stockade that surrounded the house. The dogs were all eager to start, and as Peter had said good-bye to his wife, Maruscha, he was now as impatient to be off as the dogs were.

"Be sure and fasten the gate at once, and don't open it again except for something very urgent," cautioned Mr. Stroboleff.

"Of course, we shall be ever so careful," Johnny said stoutly. "I'll see that the gate is kept barred until you come back."

"Then I think you will take no harm during my absence, unless an enemy comes over the fence."

At this remark all the family laughed with satisfaction, for the fence was so solid, and so high, and it was surmounted by such a formidable iron railing, from which terrible spikes stuck out upwards and outwards, that it was believed to be absolutely unscalable by either man or beast. Then Peter cracked his long whip, and the dogs started on their journey, the while Mr. Stroboleff, looking round, watched the gate safely closed behind him, little dreaming of the awful experience in store for his beloved ones during his absence.

The Stroboleffs were very poor compared with what they had been before the father of the family had fallen on evil days, and had been banished to Siberia for supposed complicity in a plot to assassinate the Tsar. He was innocent, being a man who would have scorned to lend his assistance to a band of wilful murderers, but his protestations did not help him when an enemy denounced him, for his sympathies were known to be on the side of the people.

Besides, he had married an Englishwoman, the sister of Lord Gunnersby, a somewhat reckless politician, who had made more than one speech against the Russian Government. And he had shown his own disrespect for the land of his birth by bringing up his children as if they were entirely English. So when he tried to prove that he was not the Tsar's enemy, he was not believed, and he was told that he had escaped very lightly by being only sentenced to perpetual banishment to Siberia, without being compelled to work in the life-destroying mines.

Lord Gunnersby was in England at the time this sudden blow struck his relatives, so he could not help his sister in her trouble. But even if he had been in St. Petersburg, things would not have been much different, for nothing would have induced Madame Stroboleff to let her husband go into exile without her. At this dark period of their lives, Mamie was

fifteen years old, and Johnny was ten, and though it was suggested that they should remain behind, they positively refused to be separated from their parents. Peter and Maruscha Strakoff, two faithful servants, also accompanied them, and at the time we make their acquaintance, they had almost forgotten better days.

Only a small part of Mr. Stroboleff's fortune had been left to him, and as it had to be eked out by something, he and Peter occupied themselves in procuring the furs which they had now gone to sell in Irkutsk.

For many days after their departure, everything went on as usual, except that things were now quieter than ever. Madame Stroboleff, who had been brought up in ease and luxury, spent most of her time in needlework, though Mamie often protested that she could do all there was to do.

Mamie found a great deal to do. Sometimes she helped Maruscha with the cooking. And she spent many an hour in manufacturing all sorts of pretty things to decorate the barely furnished sitting-room, so that her mother might be cheered a little. Johnny was also industrious enough, and was very useful to his father and Peter during the daytime. After evening set in, most of the family helped him with his studies, or Mr. Stroboleff would read aloud, Peter and Maruscha being permitted to listen to what was being read, whenever they cared to do so.

"Maruscha," said Mamie, towards the close of a terribly cold afternoon, "I'm going to make some fresh hot soup for supper. Have you any meat in the house?"

"Only a bit of bacon that was left over from breakfast, Miss Mamie," answered Maruscha, who was disconsolately examining some potatoes which had been quite spoiled by the frost. "The bones that were left from dinner I gave to the two dogs—they want some nice, comforting food as well as the best of us, in weather like this."

"So they do, poor things! But what about the meat? Have we any in the safe?"

"Some salt beef and two hares. There is also some venison."

"Well, I think we will boil some of the beef. I'll ask Johnny to help me to get it, so you don't need to come."

Maruscha was very glad to be excused. She was none too well this afternoon, and did not care about facing the icy wind which found its way even over the high fence which was deemed such a capital safeguard against the intrusion of man or beast.

"Thank you, Miss Mamie," she said gratefully. "I'd be very glad if you'd see to it yourself. And if Master Johnny wouldn't mind, I think we ought to have some more logs brought in."

Johnny was carving a pipe-rack for his father, but he didn't object to do this less pleasing service, and after the two young folks had each put on a warm coat, and a seal-skin cap, they opened the house door, and quickly shut it behind them again, to prevent too much cold air finding its way to mother and Maruscha. Then they went to the wood shed, which was built against the fence, on the side facing the kitchen window, and not many yards from the only door which the primitively-built house boasted.

Johnny carried two or three basketfuls of logs indoors, and Mamie built up both the kitchen fire and the sitting-room fire, so that the kitchen stove would cook anything that it might be wanted to cook, while the tall china stove in the centre of the sitting-room cast a warm glow all round it.

"There, mumsy dear," said the girl, her pretty face looking prettier than ever with the rosy colour brought to it by the sharp, frosty air outside, "we shall be delightfully cosy by-and-by, and as soon as the beef is put on to boil I'll attend to the lamp myself, to make sure that we have plenty of light. And I'll hang the lantern up, in case father and Peter reach home to-night."

Madame Stroboleff smiled at her bonnie daughter; but her heart ached again to think how different the girl's fate ought to have been.

"What a sensation her beautiful crown of dark hair, her laughing eyes, and her lovely face would make in an English ballroom!" thought the sorely-tried lady. "I thought my brother would never rest until he had secured my husband's recall to civilisation. But he

seems, like the rest of the world, to have forgotten us."

Mamie had not waited in the room, for there was just a chance that Mr. Stroboleff would reach home soon, and she wanted him to lack nothing in the way of a warm welcome. When everything was done, she indulged in a little romp with Johnny and the two house dogs for a few minutes, but had not much inclination for the game of snowball which Johnny suggested, for the snow was hard, and difficult to handle, although there was certainly no lack of it.

"No, no," she protested laughingly, "there's no fun in playing with pieces of ice. As soon as we have a nice fresh snowstorm, I'll have a game with you, but I think that the meat had better be attended to just now."

"I suppose it had. But, oh dear, I do wish I had another boy here to play with me!"

Mamie felt the terrible monotony of the life they all led quite as much as any of them, and she was very sorry for her poor little brother, who was still too young to understand the full extent of the calamity that had overwhelmed his parents. But she had wisdom beyond her years, and she never encouraged either melancholy or discontent, if she could help it, for she knew that troubles only became worse by brooding over them. So she ignored Johnny's lament, and in another minute they were both standing inside the "meat safe."

This meat safe was in reality a sort of storehouse for all sorts of food. The fresh meat, when there was any, was kept in a wooden cupboard, fronted with perforated zinc, which kept the flies off it during the short, but very hot, summer. Salted meat was kept in barrels, and there were usually some small casks of flour, meal, butter, and lard, though the stock of everything was rather low until Peter added the fresh supply he and his master were fetching from Irkutsk. Overhead were hooks for ham and bacon; and various heaps on the floor were composed of potatoes, beets, carrots, and turnips, well buried in a good depth of soil to preserve them from the frost.

"ARMED WITH THEIR RIFLES, A STOCK OF CARTRIDGES, AND THE BIG LANTERN, MAMIE AND JOHNNY SOFTLY LEFT THE HOUSE."—(*f.* 430.)

It will be seen that the safe was a large structure, comparatively speaking, though it was only a lean-to, built with its back to the thick fence. The large kennel for the sledge dogs, which adjoined the safe, was built in almost the same style, both erections being so contrived that every possible airhole was boarded over. Otherwise, one night's frost would penetrate, and work destruction.

"Maruscha wants some potatoes while we are out," said Mamie.

So Johnny, after helping Mamie to get the beef, began to unearth some potatoes, but presently made an exclamation of surprise.

"I say, Mamie," he said, "there's some work here for Peter. He'll have to mend this partition as soon as he comes back, or the sledge dogs will be in the meat safe. They've actually torn a hole here quite big enough for Fritz and Rollo to get through, and it won't take them long to make it big enough for themselves, if they get the chance."

Mamie looked at the hole with some concern, but concluded that as the sledge dogs were still away, their kennel was not likely to be opened just yet, so there was no fear of frost entering the safe from that direction before Peter had time to remedy the damage that had been done. Meanwhile, as an extra precaution, she helped Johnny to bank the hole up with soil, and then, being thoroughly starved, they shut the safe door after them, and carried their provisions to the house.

"Where are Fritz and Rollo?" asked Mamie, looking round, before closing the house door. "I thought they were both in the yard."

"So did I," was Johnny's unconcerned answer. "I saw them just before I began to dig the potatoes up. They must have got tired of waiting for us, and Maruscha has let them into the house again."

Mamie thought so too, and gave the dogs no further attention for the time being, for she was soon busily employed in cooking the supper.

"I hope father and Peter will reach home to-night," she said wistfully to Maruscha. "It must be fearfully cold travelling for them, and they would find this nice hot soup so comforting. And we'll have everything ready to give the dogs a warm meal too before they are kennelled."

"Well, Peter will look after them as soon as he gets them into the yard. And that reminds me, Miss Mamie, where are the house dogs?"

"Why, didn't you let them in?"

"No. I've not seen them since they went out with Master Johnny and you."

"How strange! Perhaps mother opened the door for them."

But Mrs. Stroboleff knew nothing about either Rollo or Fritz, who were a sort of cross between Esquimaux dogs and greyhounds, but smaller in size, and as neither of them answered when they were called, the whole house was searched. But no dogs were to be seen, and it became obvious that they must still be out of doors.

So the door was opened again, and both Johnny and Mamie went into the yard to let the favourites in. Mrs. Stroboleff, who was feeling very anxious about them, joined in the search, after she had put some warm wraps on. But still there was no sign of the absentees, and Mamie had just unbarred the safe door, to see if they had been fastened inside, when a strange, uncanny sound was borne towards her on the keen, frosty air.

The sound made the girl's heart almost stand still with sudden fear, for she had heard it before, and knew it to be the harbinger of awful peril to anything alive that might be unprotected. Glancing round to see if anyone beside herself had noticed the sound, she saw that her mother's face was deadly pale, and that Johnny was listening attentively.

"Didn't you hear something?" asked the boy. But the faces of his mother and sister were sufficient answer for him, and he whispered in an awe-stricken voice: "It's wolves! I heard some last winter, and they howled just like that."

"Heaven grant that your father and Peter are many a mile away yet!"

The same thought had instantly occurred to Mamie, and her blood nearly froze with horror as she pictured what her father's fate was sure to be, unless he had been detained in Irkutsk longer than he had anticipated. But courage was second nature with Mamie Stroboleff, and

she saw at once that she must exert herself to prevent the other members of their tiny community from giving way to unreasoning panic.

"Father is sure to be miles and miles away," she said soothingly, "so I don't think we need worry about him. You know you said yourself this morning, mumsy dear, that you didn't think he could do all his business and be back home before to-morrow at the soonest."

"Did I, darling? It's a relief to be able to think so."

Mamie looked at her mother with fresh anxiety, for the manner in which she spoke showed that she was either partly dazed by terror on behalf of her husband and his faithful servant, or that the effort to hide her real feelings was too much for her. She certainly did not believe in the truth of the words she had just uttered, though she might possibly be trying to do so, and even Johnny, untutored though he was in gauging other people's emotions, saw that there was something seriously amiss with his mother.

"I say, Mamie," he exclaimed, "mother's feeling the cold, and I expect she got a bit of a scare when she heard those horrid wolves. They frightened me too at first, till I recollected that father was ever so far off, and that we were safely fenced in. Shall we go into the house, mother? It's no use listening to that stupid noise, is it?"

Madame Stroboleff was, morally, one of the bravest women alive. Nor had she felt the least hesitation in sharing her husband's exile, with all the hardships and privations it was sure to entail upon a woman reared in so mild a climate as England, and used to all the comforts of civilisation. But her courage was of that dependent kind which could only flourish in the presence of the beloved object for which she had been willing to sacrifice herself, and now, deprived of her husband's strong arm and protecting devotion, she was absolutely helpless.

But she was unselfish, and solicitous of the safety of her children. A sudden giddiness almost deprived her of the power to stand, and she insisted that both Johnny and Mamie must come indoors at once, lest they should catch cold. That any other danger menaced them never occurred to her, for she reflected that the stockade was quite impervious to the attacks of the wolves whose howls were borne so weirdly on the frosty air. But she dreaded what might happen if her husband and Peter were overtaken by the ravening horde of monsters, and even as she was led to the rude couch in the sitting-room, she fainted.

Maruscha, who had just made some dumplings, because she thought it possible for the travellers to reach home that night, and because she knew her Peter to be very fond of English dumplings, had not noticed anything unusual until she saw her mistress stagger into the sitting-room, where she was laying the cloth.

"Oh, my poor, dear mistress!" she cried, lifting her hands in dismay, and letting a plate fall on the floor. "She has one of her fainting attacks again! Something must have happened to give her a fright. Is it the dogs?"

By this time, Madame Stroboleff was lying down, and Maruscha, who certainly wasted no time while she was talking, ran to the cupboard and reached some restoratives, which she applied at once.

"Is it the dogs?" she repeated, and she almost lost her wits, too, when Mamie answered her in a whisper: "No. We heard some wolves howling, and mother thought at once of our travellers."

"Oh, Heaven preserve my Peter! Suppose the wolves devoured him and the master, within reach of home?"

"Very likely the animals will not come their way at all. But if they do, Johnny and I intend to be ready to open the gate the instant the sledge is near enough. You attend to mother, and trust us to attend to the travellers."

Maruscha thought this plan could not be improved upon, so the brave young sister and brother closed the sitting-room door behind them, and prepared to do whatever circumstances might call upon them to do.

CHAPTER II.

Mamie's first thought after leaving the two women was to go to the kitchen for the lantern, and while Johnny cleaned it and lighted it, she,

with a housewife's true forethought, pulled all the pans and kettles off the top of the kitchen stove, so that none of the food might run the risk of burning.

"Mamie," whispered the little boy, "don't you hear them now?"

"Yes, dear," was the troubled answer. "And I'm afraid they are a lot nearer than they were. They seem as if they are coming in our direction."

"Maybe they smell the cooking. Or else—— Mamie, do you think those dogs can have got out?"

It did not seem possible, for the gate had not been opened since Mr. Stroboleff set off for Irkutsk, and the dogs could certainly not climb over the fence. Yet they were still nowhere visible, and Mamie was half thinking of them when she fetched two rifles downstairs. Her father had taught her to use a rifle last winter, and Johnny was already an expert shot, so if it became necessary to act on the defensive, there was a chance that they might hit their enemies.

Armed with their rifles, a stock of cartridges, and the big lantern, they softly left the house again, and listened intently. There was soon no doubt that the pack of wolves were much nearer than when they were first heard, and their howling, yelping, and snarling was absolutely bloodcurdling to listen to, even had there been no cause for anxiety. But these children were in terror for the life of their beloved father, and they were resolved to neglect no precautions for his safety.

To this end, they placed two broad-runged ladders against the stockade, and, after hanging the lantern over a spike of the iron railing, to serve as a beacon for the travellers, they anxiously surveyed the bleak, snow-covered landscape. Although it was now evening it was quite possible to see a great distance, for in Northern regions, where the nights are very long, there is never that intensity of darkness to which we are accustomed, and the snow serves to still further assist the eye.

Thus it happened that when another of those awful waves of sound reached the ears of the anxious watchers, they simultaneously discerned a moving black mass which looked like a huge cloud on the glittering surface of snow, its enormous expanse proving how great the number of the famine-stricken beasts must be.

"Oh, Mamie! I believe there are thousands of them!" ejaculated the frightened boy, instinctively dropping his voice to a whisper, as if he feared to attract undue attention to themselves. Mamie was about to answer, when her strained gaze caught sight of something which nearly drove her wild with horror.

Between the stockade and the wolves could be seen a small, flying object, racing with the speed of the wind, but only apparently lessening the distance between itself and the pursuing horde.

"What is that?" she gasped, pointing frantically to the fugitive object. "Surely, surely it isn't Father's sledge!"

Johnny soon saw that it was a sledge. But it could not be his father's, he thought, for it was drawn by horses, instead of dogs, and he knew that Mr. Stroboleff was sure to use his dogs on the return journey. But although reassured on that point, neither Mamie nor Johnny relaxed their anxiety to save the occupants of the sledge, and the lantern was waved wildly, to attract their attention to a possible ark of refuge.

Presently, the whole tragic scene could be plainly discerned—the tearing, murdering, howling wolves, in close pursuit of a frail vehicle drawn by two maddened, quivering, straining horses, that were being frantically whipped to greater exertion by the driver. Beside the driver sat another man, and, what surprised the onlookers even in that moment of supreme horror, two dogs could be seen making desperate efforts to keep abreast of the sledge, and outdistance the pursuing, demoniacal crew which surged after with relentless, sickening speed.

"Rollo! Fritz! They are lost!" screamed Johnny, almost beside himself with dread.

"And those men! And the poor horses!" sobbed Mamie. "Oh, is it impossible to save them? Look, the wolves are gaining every second! O-o-h!"

Mamie shut her eyes for an instant, fearful of beholding the fugitives torn to bits, for the first of the wolves actually touched the sledge,

"MAMIE LIFTED THE FLAMING BOMB AND FLUNG IT WITH ALL HER MIGHT, RIGHT INTO THE MIDDLE OF THE FIGHTING CROWD OF WOLVES."—(*p.* 433.)

only, however, to fall immediate victims to their own temerity, for the passenger in the sledge fired several shots, and as many of the assailants rolled over, either killed outright or mortally wounded.

The snarling and howling of the wolves in the rear increased into veritable shrieks of fury, as each wolf now saw himself within reach of a meal of which the greater speed of some of his fellows might soon deprive him. But the position of the fugitives had improved immensely, and while the wolves stopped to fight over the remains of their late comrades, the sledge rapidly put space between itself and them, all the while pushing steadily towards the spot where a shaking lantern seemed to promise a chance of safety.

"Johnny," cried Mamie, "we can save them! Give me the signal, and if the sledge gets near enough to rush through the gate without letting the wolves in at the same time, all may be well yet."

"I'll open the gate, Mamie."

"No, no, I couldn't let you do it. You are not tall enough to manage that great bar as quickly as it must be done, if we are not all to be devoured. How far off are they now?"

While speaking, Mamie had jumped down from her perch, and had partially lifted from its socket the big iron bar which secured the gate on the inside. But she hardly needed to ask the last question, for there was a frenzied cry for help, and the terrified barking of the two dogs, followed by a wild gallop towards the gate which Mamie, by a herculean effort, flung open just in time. Then there was a thundering rush into the yard by two foaming, exhausted horses; a swirl of snow, carried in by the rocking sledge; the demented return of two repentant dogs; and the refastening of the saving gate, just as one of the pursuing monsters flung himself against it!

"Thank God! Oh, thank God!" exclaimed Mamie, and the cry was echoed by a tall, distinguished-looking man, who sprang from the sledge at once, and shook his deliverer warmly by the hand.

"Thank God indeed!" he said, his voice broken with emotion. "And thank you also, for, but for your help, my moujik and I would now have been feeding the wolves."

Although the speakers were in Russia, nothing but English had so far been spoken, but there was no time to comment on the fact just then, for both Madame Stroboleff and Maruscha had heard the frightful commotion, and had rushed out, as they believed, to the assistance of the "children."

"Ethelred! My brother!"

"Rose! My dear, dear sister!"

With these exclamations, the newcomer and Mrs. Stroboleff hurriedly embraced each other, and notwithstanding all the din and turmoil that the enraged wild beasts were creating outside, Mamie felt a sudden thrill of joy, for her uncle's advent could have but one interpretation—he must have procured her father's pardon, and had come to fetch them all back to civilisation! This was indeed the case, and while his driver attended to the exhausted horses, with Maruscha's assistance, and began to house them in the empty stable behind the kennels, he hurriedly explained how successful he had been in convincing the Tsar of Mr. Stroboleff's innocence.

"The fellow who denounced him has confessed himself a perjurer," he continued, "and all Alexander's property is to be restored to him. Ugh! how those beasts do howl!"

Johnny had been bestowing some attention on the two foolish dogs who had taken surreptitious leave, when a sudden paralysing thought struck him.

"Mamie!" he screamed. "The dogs must have got out through the safe and the kennels, when we had the doors open! Listen! I believe the wolves are trying to come in through the holes the dogs have made."

The tall, iron-spiked stockade had inspired everybody with such a sense of security, that, for the moment, the undisciplined hullaballoo on the outside had been robbed of some of its horror, and the scene had become one of temporary rejoicing. But Johnny's words gave an awful significance to a scratching, tearing sound which now became audible, and Lord Gunnersby implored everybody to seek immediate safety indoors.

"There are two of us men to defend you,"

he began. "Ivan and I will shoot as many as we can of the beasts, in the hope of driving them off."

"*Three* men," said Johnny, stoutly. "I can shoot. And I know best where the beasts would be likely to come in."

During this short and almost breathless conversation, Mamie had sprung to the door of the safe, and had shot the big bolt which had been left unfastened, for she knew as well as Johnny what would happen if the enemy effected an entrance there. She was sick with dread, but was nevertheless as brave as a young lion, and would not have dreamed of relinquishing her duty as one of the defenders of the little beleaguered garrison. So it came about that she and the "three men" were all soon waging unequal battle against the advancing hordes, Johnny having so skilfully perched himself between the spikes of the railing as to be able to level his weapon right into the mass of struggling animals which were, sure enough, trying to tear their way through the aperture which had been partially prepared for their entrance by the mischievous dogs.

The sight was a dreadful one, for the cannibalistic horde had no mercy on wounded comrades. But though each wolf that was killed caused a little gain in time, it only served to bring others to the spot, and at last Lord Gunnersby said despairingly: "We shall never be able to keep the brutes out of the place unless we can invent some means of scaring the senses out of the whole crew. My cartridges are nearly all finished, and Ivan's have already given out."

This statement was perfectly true. The moment was one of deepest peril. But it was also the one in which an inspiration came to Mamie. She had noticed her uncle's words about a "scare" being necessary to banish the wolves. And she instantly recollected having read how some endangered miners once saved themselves. What they had done, she could do, and she turned eagerly to her uncle.

"Promise me that you will jump out of the way, so that I can run to the top of this ladder the instant I come out of the house again," she said, and though Lord Gunnersby had no idea what the courageous young girl intended doing, he readily gave the required promise.

Then, while the men waited grimly for the fearful end which seemed inevitable; while Johnny, his courage at last broken, ran to his mother, who clasped him convulsively in her arms; and while Maruscha loudly lamented the evil destiny which separated her from her Peter in her hour of danger, Mamie ran into the kitchen, and prepared her weapon of destruction, which was to take the shape of a primitive bomb.

Hastily emptying the remainder of a case of cartridges, she put the contents into a stocking which she took from a clothes-rail. Then she rolled some of Maruscha's linen aprons round the stocking, and, having pinned the bundle carefully together, she put it into a shallow zinc dish, and poured kerosene all over it, so that it was soaked through. Seizing a box of matches, she now ran into the yard, and sprang up the ladder which her uncle vacated for her.

The ghoulish habit which wolves have of devouring each other when rendered defenceless would now stand her in good stead, for the last two shots which had taken effect had provoked a frenzied struggle for the bodies, which had been dragged a few yards away by their first captors, who were instantly made the central units of a snarling, struggling heap of wolfish greed.

Mamie, whom the others were watching with wonderment, put a match to the kerosene, which blazed up in an instant. Then lifting the flaming bomb in her leather-gloved hands, she flung it with all her might, right into the middle of the fighting crowd of wolves. Before the latter had time to spring away, there was a tremendous explosion, followed by such a chorus of shrieks and howls, that there could be no doubt of the success of the hazardous experiment.

A moment later, such of the panic-stricken animals as were not killed could be seen flying, as fast as their legs could carry them, from the neighbourhood where fire from above rained upon them. The wolves were scattered.

On the following day, Mr. Stroboleff and the faithful Peter arrived in safety, and listened with astonished joy to the good tidings which awaited them.

The Real . . . "Cranford."

A Visit to Knutsford, the Village about which Mrs. Gaskell wrote so delightfully.

"MRS. FORRESTER'S" HOUSE.

Separated from "Cranford" by "Darkness Lane," where the ladies were frightened returning from the party in sedan chairs.

It was discovered long ago that the place, "Cranford," described in Mrs. Gaskell's famous story, was Knutsford. To the old house on the heath in Knutsford, the baby, Elizabeth Cleghorn Stevenson, came when only a few weeks old to be brought up by her aunt; and there she lived till she grew to womanhood. In the parish church she was married, and in the quiet graveyard on the sloping bank-side by Brook Street her ashes rest.

"MISS MATTY'S" HOUSE.

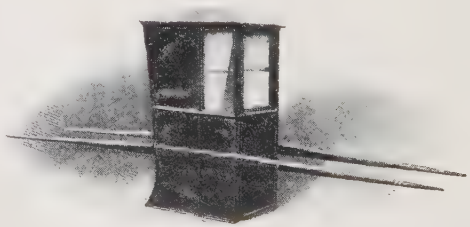
Where she sold tea, and distributed comfits after "Peter" came back.

Thus it is that Knutsford is identified with the personality of Mrs. Gaskell, and, besides, she has put it into many of her books. It is "Cranford" most of all, but it is also "Hollingford" in "Wives and Daughters"—the story she was writing when she suddenly died—and it is "Barford" in "The Squire's Tale." Turn which way you will in Knutsford there are houses and places identified with the gifted author.

Walking about through the quiet old town, one pauses to admire the timbered houses of Tudor and Stuart days, and surely looks in at the George Inn—The Royal George—to see its rooms, or to inspect the old sedan-chair, carefully kept there, which "Cranford" people like to think is the identical one "Miss Matty" rode in. On the post-office front is the bronze bas-relief portrait of Mrs Gaskell, and near the western end of Bottom Street stands "Mrs. Forrester's" house. Farther on, beyond the old cottages, is the entrance to Tatton Park, the "Cumnor Towers" of "Wives and Daughters."

THE "ROYAL GEORGE" INN.

Here Signor Brunoni exhibited and the "County families" had balls.



So is the real grouped with the imagined. On Top Street, just where the passage-way comes out from "The George" yard, is the house and shop which was "Miss Matty's." Out by the

ONE OF THE OLD STREETS OF KNUTSFORD.

The frame-timbered houses on the left, at the lower end of "Bottom" Street, are quaint and rare old examples.

heath is the actual house, Mrs. Lumb's, where the baby girl grew up to womanhood. Overlooking the heath is the house in which lived "Higgins, the highwayman"—a robber real enough, described in "The Squire's Tale." The parish church of St. John the Baptist, in which Mrs. Gaskell was married, is real also, and so is the Unitarian Chapel, quaint, ivy-grown and latticed, by the side of which are the Gaskell graves. The stone cross that marks them is plainly visible from the garden side of Brook House near by, which must be that of "The Honourable Mrs. Jamieson," sister-in-law to "Lady Glenmire," and owner of fat "Fido."

These are a few of the features of the

BROOK HOUSE—"THE HON. MRS. JAMIESON'S.

Showing the garden front. Looking out on the pleasant grounds are the living-rooms where the ladies of Cranford sat and gossiped.

THE AUTHOR OF "CRANFORD" AT 19.

A Bust of E. C. Stevenson (Mrs. Gaskell), by Dundas, of Edinburgh.

MRS. GASKELL AFTER HER MARRIAGE.

The favourite portrait of Mrs. Gaskell painted by George Richmond in 1832.

THE "ROSE AND CROWN" INN, IN "BOTTOM" (KING) STREET.

town at old Knut-his-ford, which is now our Cranford. And where is it, do you ask? Just thirteen miles south of "Drumble," which is really Manchester; in the Cheshire pastures, a region quaint and quiet; in an atmosphere of imagination; in the midst of enduring fame.

THE SMITHY AND MILL AT SANDLEBRIDGE.

It appears as "Woodley," the house of Miss Matty's old lover in Cranford, and as "Heathbridge" in "Cousin Phillis."

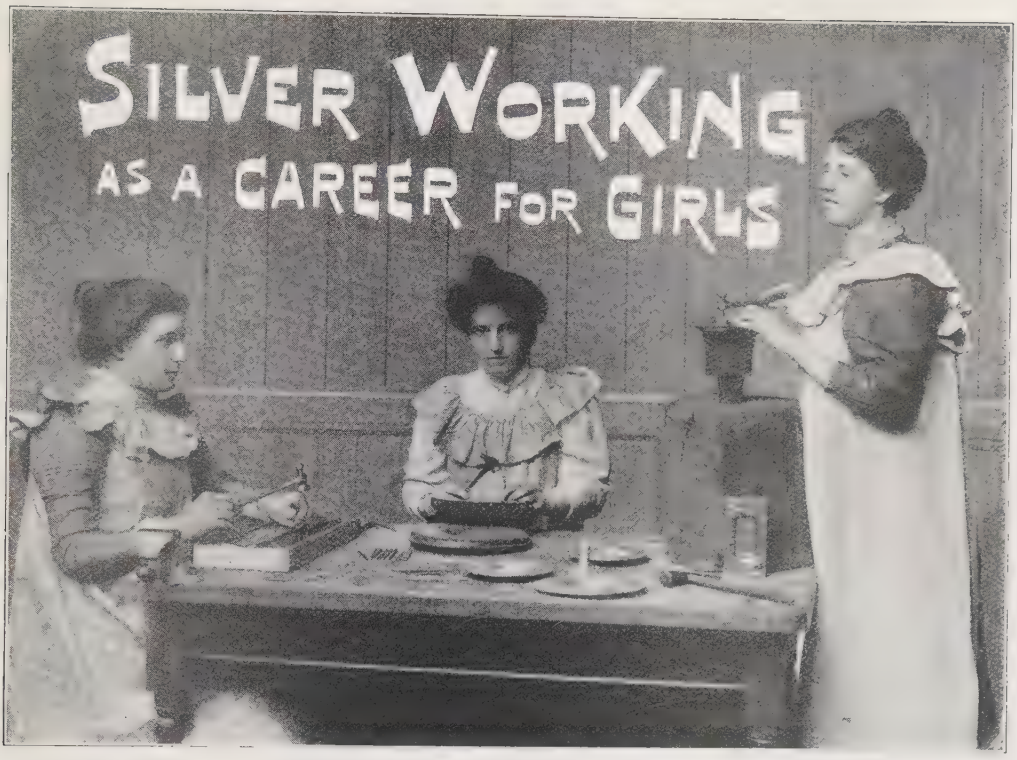
We have all read "Cranford" and we all love it. Now we know that that village wherein no man save the Captain was tolerated, where every one was poor and every one practised "elegant economy" is Knutsford, the town so much associated with Mrs. Gaskell.

Dear "Cranford," how we know the people in it. Miss Matty and Holbrook, Miss Jessie and the Captain, and Miss Jenkins, who was devoted to Doctor Johnson, and could not forgive the Captain for preferring Mr. Boz to him. They all live, they all suffer, they all rejoice before us. We love to wander down the old-fashioned, quiet streets of Knutsford and think of all the good ladies going down at three o'clock of a winter's afternoon to play cards at each other's houses and partake of tea and bread and butter and sponge cake. It was simple fare, for it was considered "vulgar and ostentatious" to give anything expensive in the way of eatables and drinkables. How gravely elated were the ladies as they sat together in their best dresses and talked about household forms and ceremonies in the intervals of playing their games. At nine o'clock it was time to go home, so after a glass of wine and another sponge cake they would clatter home in their pattens under the guidance of a lantern man, and an hour after all the town was abed and asleep.

THE GRAVE OF MRS. GASKELL.

She lies in the Brook Street Chapel graveyard, her husband beside her, under the stone cross.

SILVER WORKING AS A CAREER FOR GIRLS



MISS CHRISTINA CONNELL AND TWO PUPILS AT WORK.

BY LAURA ALEX. SMITH.

THERE appears to be practically no restrictions to the openings for girls who wish to make a career for themselves; almost every profession and a great number of trades are within their compass, and as for the arts which lie in this new kingdom of Young Womanhood—well, their name is legion. The old art of working silver with pitch, or as our French neighbours term it *argent goudronné*, is a revived one.

The first step in silver working is to ascertain the exact gauge of the metal to be used, as this, in a measure, decides the weight of the copper or silver; the former is generally used for elementary working, as it is less expensive than silver, and is besides of a more docile nature and much less difficult to manipulate. The design is first laid on to a piece of metal, and it is cut with a steel point, a fine tracer follows and after that a very heavy one: thus the design is transferred to the metal. A pitch bath receives it, and it is then pressed or "laid down" on it, and the pitch keeps the metal in place whilst the complications of the design are being raised and tooled upon it.

Briefly this is a description of silver working as it might be understood by a fairly skilful craftsman or craftswoman, but before such a point is reached there is a very great deal to learn. It is not, as I have said, absolutely essential that a worker should be possessed of a knowledge of drawing, yet it can scarcely be possible to achieve perfection in the work without some acquaintance with the sister art. To show just exactly the degree of importance in this aspect of it, I quote that renowned authority on all metal-work, Mr. Gawthorp (Art Metal Worker to His Majesty King Edward VII.):—"To those attracted by *repoussé* work without a knowledge of drawing, and, consequently nervous about trying a work termed artistic, and for which they are therefore unable to make designs, it may be said that though a good knowledge of drawing is absolutely necessary to arrive at perfection and to produce original work, yet much may be done by a person of good taste who is almost wholly ignorant of the way to express his ideas with pencil and paper; all that is necessary in this case is to do what so many artisans in a like position have to do, work

from the designs of others, and of these there will be found no lack, in every way suitable to the purpose of *repoussé*."

When copper is being used it should be of a thicker gauge than brass (generally from 26 to 22 imperial standard wire gauge or 6 to 10 metal gauge), and whenever possible the metal should be in flat sheets ready for use. The copper to be asked for is known technically as bright rolled. Should it not be found possible to obtain the metal in flat sheets, it will be necessary to prepare it, a process which any of the small books published on metal working will explain. The pattern may be drawn on the sheet of copper, which has previously been flattened and screwed with very small screws to a board of wood, smoothed surfacely if necessary, with very fine emery paper, and polished with whitening and chamois leather, with a fine camel's-hair brush or common ink and a pen.

An easy way of transferring a pattern is to have a carbon paper, made by smoking paper and then rubbing the smoke partly off. This must be laid on the metal, the design over it, and the latter gone over with an ivory point or hard lead pencil.

Now as to the pitch itself, which is really a cement made half of Burgundy pitch and half of plaster of Paris mixed; but it is much easier and quite as cheap to purchase this ready in cakes from the dealer in tools. The pitch must first be laid on a bed, varying of course in shape and in size with the work to be done; it may either be a wooden bowl, a piece of wood with raised edges, or a block of stone. Have the pitch or cement ready melted, and pour it out on to the bed till it is about an inch thick. Before it completely hardens, lay the copper on it face downward, and bring enough of the pitch over the edges to hold it fast when cool, using the spatula tool to spread it with. When using the pitch it is a good plan to have a basin of water near to dip the fingers in, as otherwise it is very apt to stick to them. Before the mass has had time to become quite cool, beat with one of the ball-headed tools into the biggest hollows on the sheet quite gradually, and as though you were sculpturing; then repeat this operation on the smaller hollows. The fact that the plate is lying face downward must be taken into account when laying the pattern or drawing it on to the metal, because everything will be reversed; for instance, hollows become reliefs and any lettering would be reversed when the plate is looked at from the front.

When this elementary part of the work is finished, the pitch must be softened again and the plate or sheet taken out and washed in petroleum. Any imperfections in it should then be remedied, the whole being put back into the bath. If it seems to be all right, and thoroughly clear and clean, fill the back (that part which has just been worked with cement) and lay the work face upward. Then, when the pitch has again hardened, work on it with the finer tools, sharpening and renewing the outsides, and filling in with the beaters the ground work. Perhaps it may be as well to state here that the processes of outlining and stamping the ground are just the same in this art of working in silver or copper as in sheet-leather or wood-work, so that any student sufficiently adept at these crafts would find the silver working comparatively easy. The acquiring of familiarity with a new material to work in is really the only difficulty. If a jar, a vase, or a cream jug is to be *repoussé*, with perhaps too small an aperture to allow of either the hammer or the beater being used inside, the snarling irons or "Snarls" as some people term them, have to be employed. This is an iron rod, bent at right angles near one end, and in an opposite direction at the other, terminating in a round knob. With this instrument all the principal parts are raised, and then the article is filled with liquid pitch and the design is finished with chasing tools from the outside.

Pewter also lends itself very admirably to this kind of work, and a tankard or goblet of it can be easily stamped and traced, first filling it with pitch as in the case of the silver vase or cream jug.

With regard to the working on silver itself, an expert says: "It is a most pleasant metal to work upon, and if properly prepared in the first instance will bear a large amount of expansion without cracking." When sheet silver is purchased it is hard, almost as springy as steel, and were it to be used in this state, failure, in some way or other, might safely be predicted. Care must be taken to thoroughly soften and flatten it before use, and to remove the bluish marks in it left by the steel rollers by stoning it with Water of Ayr stone.

When a worker has once become proficient it is a waste of time for her to undertake the fixing of the parts of the article together, as any ordinary workman can accomplish this. Beginners are generally set to try their 'prentice hands on some quite small article, such as a pin, a brooch, a small ash-tray, or a tiny bon-bon dish.

One of the cleverest and most successful exponents of silver working is Miss Christina Connell,

whose studio and workrooms are situated at 22. Stafford Place, Buckingham Gate, S.W. Here she not only carries on her own work, executing orders, etc, but she takes pupils, and when these latter have acquired proficiency, she is quite willing to take them on as employées, so extended has her business become.

Miss Connell's father is a London silver merchant, and as she had from her childhood a good idea of design, being an excellent artist, he asked her if she could undertake some of the work for him. Her answer was characteristic of the policy she has maintained throughout, for she said she was quite certain she could learn whatever there was to be learnt, and that she was quite willing to try. Mr. Connell employed some foreign workmen, and from these his daughter learnt what she could. The English artists did not seem to take to the work at all, and there were not sufficient French and German workmen to undertake all the orders there were in hand. After some three months' training and constantly watching the men at their tooling and general manipulation of the metal, Miss Connell was able to take up the work, and she very soon found that orders came in thick and fast, and the question of having some capable helpers presented itself. She takes pupils either at a premium of £50, or at the rate of £1 a week. The hours are from ten to five, from Monday till Friday. Miss Connell hopes in time to found a regular school for training girls in this metal work. A knowledge of freehand drawing is very desirable, but it is not essential, for the silver worker need not be more than a copyist. Accuracy in this, as in all kindred crafts, must be observed. At the present time two of Miss Connell's pupils are County Council Scholars, and a third has already achieved a reputation as a designer, the font and candlesticks in Ripon Cathedral being her work.

Miss Connell strongly recommends adding the art of enamelling to that of working in silver. They are frequently used in conjunction, the one as background, the other by way of relief, and she considers that the former is very necessary for the embellishing of the work most in vogue today. A girl who is a proficient worker may earn £200 a year, and perhaps the average for a beginner who has received a good training would be from £50. Enamelling is only taught after the silver working has been thoroughly mastered. A girl who has no particular artistic knowledge to boast of, nor any out-of-the-way capacity for specialised work, may yet earn a good living at the purely practical part of the business, such as making the articles up after the pattern has been tooled on to them. There is, for instance, the fitting together of the parts, the hinging of trinket boxes, the mounting of buckles and brooches, shaping of cups or bowls and many other things, all of which may come under the heading of plain work.

The designing and executing of medals is another branch of the artistic labour carried on at Miss Connell's school: many of these awards of merit have emanated from her clever brains, some being in bronze, others in gold and silver.

A SILVER THREE-HANDLED POT AND PLATED SUGAR BASIN, WORKED BY MISS CHRISTINA CONNELL.

An article on silver work would be incomplete without mentioning the excellent achievements therein by Miss G. Smith and Miss Gilbert. These ladies are, however, metal workers as well as silver workers. They have done beautiful portrait heads that have an old Italian stateliness and repose of expression: charming brooches and caskets. In pure silver work they have also excelled, and the beauty of their workmanship is remarkable. A bowl that stands out for its delicate handling and for its free and elegant design was commissioned by one of the great provincial firms, and remains a unique example of feminine

taste and feminine originality in design. Other women have also excelled in the art, but few are silver workers alone. They usually join to efficiency therein, a great facility in every sort of metal work.

The art of working in metals has ever been a jealously guarded secret and that of *argent goudronné* is the most closely kept of all. Those who are proficient in it say that the technicalities are not difficult, after a little systematic study, and the outlay on appliances is less costly than that for many other crafts. A small workroom, if possible adjacent to a studio, serves all the requirements of space, a blow-pipe and bellows, a panful of pitch, the copper and silver, the tracers and other tools complete the impedimenta of the silver worker.

A SOCIAL BUTTERFLY.

MISS AMY. "This is your first dance, I suppose, Madeline?"
MADELINE. "*My* first dance! Oh dear no, Miss Amy! I am quite a Society woman!"

THE OXFORD CIRCUS FLOWER STAND

The women shown in the photograph have presided at their baskets for upwards of thirty years.

Spring Time at the Corner of the Street.

BY EVELYN SHARP.

Illustrated from photographs specially taken for THE GIRL'S REALM *by* W. J. BRUNELL.

I MUST admit that, for once, Miss Stillings was right. Miss Stillings is so often wrong, that I feel it is only fair to praise her when I can; and in the matter of the spring flowers, even Jake had to own that we were "jolly well scored off." It had never entered our heads before that Miss Stillings knew how to "score off" anybody.

Miss Stillings is our governess. She is also a Londoner, which makes it very difficult to be friends with her. I am quite prepared to pity her, of course; and so is Jake. But when a person doesn't want to be pitied, it is no good pitying her, and Miss Stillings actually glories in being a Londoner. She talks in the silliest way about being a citizen of the greatest city in the world, and, as Jake says, she isn't an ancient Roman after all. But you can't argue with Miss Stillings, though we often try, because mother says you ought to reason with your enemies instead of hating them. I don't think we really hate Miss Stillings, though. She plays quite a decent half-back at hockey, and I suppose she can't help being a Londoner.

Of course, we were very pleased when mother promised to let us go up to London for the day, some time during the Christmas holidays. She could not take us herself, she said, which was very disappointing; but Miss Stillings was so delighted when she heard that she was to go with us instead, that we felt rather mean for not having wanted her at first. You see, when it is holiday time, Miss Stillings never behaves as if she was crammed full of history and sums, and all those awful things; so we nearly forget,

SPRING UNDER THE WELLINGTON STATUE, ROYAL EXCHANGE.

The flower-stand that faces Cornhill.

sometimes, that she *is* a governess. She seemed rather surprised when we clapped our hands at the thought of going to London.

"Why," she exclaimed, "I thought London was such a stupid place!"

"Oh, well," explained Jake; "anybody could put up with it for a day!"

"Besides," I added, "London is all right for pantomimes and shops and sight-seeing. But you want something more than that, if you *live* in a place."

"I suppose you do. Would you mind telling me what more you want?" inquired Miss Stillings, showing such a proper spirit of humility that Jake and I were only too glad to enlighten her.

"Well, hockey and football and hunting—and rats," answered Jake.

"And flowers," said I.

"Flowers!" echoed Miss Stillings. "Why, my dear Winifred, I never could get you to take the slightest interest in botany!"

"Botany isn't flowers," said Jake, scornfully.

"And I'm devoted to flowers," I declared. "Only, of course, you don't get sentimental about them when you live in a place that's full of them."

"*Ah!*" said Miss Stillings, as if she had just scored off somebody, which, of course, she hadn't. "That is why only a Londoner can really appreciate the value of flowers."

"But there are no flowers in London for anybody to appreciate," said Jake, looking puzzled.

"Except stupid greenhouse things in shops," I added. "You can't call those *flowers*."

"What do you call flowers, please?" asked Miss Stillings, so meekly that I felt quite sorry she was getting the worst of it—as she certainly was.

"Real flowers," I answered. "Daisies and daffodils, and jonquils and violets——"

"And can you get those in the country, *now?*" asked Miss Stillings, more meekly than ever.

We both laughed hugely at this. "Isn't that like a Londoner!" chuckled Jake. "Fancy expecting to find spring flowers in the middle of winter!"

"I see," said Miss Stillings, looking crushed. "Then I suppose there is never any winter in London."

"What do you mean?" we both cried.

"Only that you can get *real* flowers all the year round in London," answered Miss Stillings, demurely.

Jake and I looked at each other incredulously.

"They must be forced things," said Jake at last.

"Dear me, no!" laughed Miss Stillings, who had suddenly stopped looking crushed; "real spring flowers, with the glory of the sunshine clinging to them! You wait until we get to London, and I will show you how the springtime lurks at the corner of every street!"

We thought that was rather a silly way of saying that you could buy cut flowers in London; but we were so excited at the thought of

seeing a pantomime that we soon forgot all about this conversation. Mother had settled that we should give up the morning of our day in town to sight-seeing, and then we could spend the afternoon at Drury Lane; and as Miss Stillings declared that she had no intention of taking us to the National Gallery or Westminster Abbey, but would be only too pleased to look at the shops, and help us to choose presents to take home, we felt sure that nothing was going to spoil our delightful expedition.

And nothing did. Only to see the way Miss Stillings behaved, as soon as she reached her beloved London, was as good as a play. She began by sniffing in the nasty smoky air at Liverpool Street, and said, "Isn't it delicious?"—just as if it had been Eau de Cologne. Jake and I thought she had gone mad; but she explained that she always went on like that when she came home. Fancy calling London "home!"

ONE OF LONDON'S PRETTIEST FLOWER-GIRLS.

A CUSTOMER.

For the same price, the flower-girl fastens the blossom in a customer's buttonhole

After that, she proposed that we should wander about the City until we felt tired, and then we could take a cab up to Oxford Street and look at the shops there. Of course, we agreed to everything she said, because the noise and the traffic bewildered us so much that we had no ideas of our own. And wandering about in those queer big streets, where everybody was in a hurry and nobody took any notice of anybody else, was so strange and exciting to country children like us that I do not think we could have thought of anything more delightful to do.

Jake wanted to buy everything he saw, especially the things on the funny little trays that the men were selling in the streets. Miss Stillings talked about waiting till we got to Oxford Street before we decided on our presents; but Jake never will wait for anybody. So he at once bought a cat chasing a mouse for cook, and a skeleton jumping over a trapeze for father,

and a black doll that kept on throwing a baby from one hand to the other for nurse, and three shirt studs on a card for the garden boy, and a pencil for Miss Stillings (we always give Miss Stillings pencils—she must have dozens by now!), and a piece of indiarubber for me. But as all these presents only cost a penny each, he still had plenty of money left to buy something really nice for mother.

Suddenly, at the corner of the street, we came upon a flower-girl selling button-holes. She had a big sort of washing-basket full of them; there were gardenias, and roses, and carnations, all wired up with bits of maidenhair fern, and perched on long, spiky sticks—to show them off, I suppose. She had a jolly, smiling face, and when she saw us looking at her, she held out a beautiful pink rose to Jake.

"Won't the little gentleman like a button-hole, now," she said, and smiled more than ever.

"How much?" asked Jake, turning rather red at being addressed in this public way. Not that it mattered, though, for people were rushing past us at such a pace that they had no time to notice him or any of us.

"Only threepence, my dear!" said the flower-girl. "Think how pretty it will look in the little gentleman's coat!"

I was afraid Jake would soon have nothing left for mother's present; so I tried to pull him away. But Miss Stillings promptly bought us a button-hole each, which was very jolly of her, I thought. But then, Miss Stillings *is* jolly when she isn't being a governess.

"All the same," said Jake, as soon as we had left the flower-girl behind, "carnations aren't spring flowers, Miss Stillings!"

I saw what he was thinking of, and chimed in, eagerly. "No, they're not, Miss Stillings!" I declared. "And you said that at the corner of every street—oh, Jake, look!"

For we had just reached the corner of the particular street in which we were walking, and I stopped in amazement at what I saw. So did Jake; only, being a boy, he just grunted instead of saying anything. Whenever Jake is especially pleased or excited, he always grunts.

"Oh, that is the Royal Exchange," observed Miss Stillings, quite calmly. "The first Royal Exchange was built by Sir Thomas Gresham in—"

We both hooted at her for being instructive. For it was not the Royal Exchange that was making us excited; it was just the piled-up masses of spring flowers that met our eyes wherever we looked. Some of the baskets were facing one way, and some another; but they were all grouped round the statue in the middle of the road, and behind each of them sat a woman, with a face as smiling as the flower-girl's had been. I suppose selling flowers all day would make anybody smile. One of the women had a baby, and it crowed and laughed as if the flowers made it feel jolly, too.

Jake and I are not a bit sentimental; but there was something about those jolly-looking flower-women and those gorgeous heaps of flowers, stuck right in the middle of all those grey buildings and those scurrying crowds of people, that made you think of springtime, and green fields, and sunshine—especially when you remembered that down in the real country there would be nothing but muddy roads and bare hedges for another three months. At least, I know I felt all that myself; and Jake grunted such a lot of times that he must have felt it, too.

"Come along, dears, or we shall be late," said Miss Stillings, gently; and she hailed a hansom and told the man to drive to Oxford Street. "And be sure to go by way of Piccadilly Circus," she added.

When we came to Piccadilly Circus, we knew why she had said that. There was a big fountain in the middle of it; and round this sat another wonderful group of flower-women, making a jolly splash of colour there, too. I should think, if you were an artist, and wanted to paint Piccadilly Circus, you'd just upset your paint-box, and let all the colours run into one another.

We got out at Oxford Circus, where we found the best flowers of all, I think. Miss Stillings wanted us to come along Oxford Street and buy mother's present; but Jake refused to move.

"There are no flowers at home," he said;

"and mother loves flowers better than anything."

"Of course!" I cried. "Let's take her some flowers for a surprise. Why, she'll think we have been to Fairyland to get them!"

"London *is* the Fairyland of flowers," murmured Miss Stillings; but we were too busy buying bunches of jonquils and violets from a dear old lady in the middle of the road to pay any attention to Miss Stillings.

"So you live in the country, my dears?" said the old lady—flower women always seem to call you "my dear." "Deary, deary me! But don't you, sure, have flowers growing all the year round in the country?"

"Oh, no," explained Jake. "Only in the spring and the summer time."

"Do these flowers grow in London?" I asked; for by this time everything was so topsy-turvy in my head that I was ready to believe anything.

"Bless your heart, no!" answered the old lady. "I gets 'em from the market, my dear."

"But where does the market get them from?" inquired Jake, who always wants to know everything.

This was too much for the old lady, who only shook her head, and said she supposed "they growed somewhere before they come to the market;" but she didn't seem to know where. Miss Stillings said things about the Channel Islands and the South of France, as we sat in a shop near the flower stand, and ate a nice shoppy lunch that finished up with ices, and had lots of ginger beer in it.

We spent the afternoon in another kind of Fairyland, that blazed with coloured lights, and was full of beautiful fairies in fluffy sort of dresses; and as we had never been to a pantomime before, you can imagine how we revelled in it. As for Jake, he was in such a state of excitement that he talked all the way home about what he was going to be when he grew up, his choice lying between a fairy, a clown, and an acrobat.

"Oh, mother!" shouted Jake, flying into her arms directly we got home; "it's been ripping! I mean to live in London when I grow up, and then I can have ginger beer for dinner and go to the pantomime every day!"

"And oh, mother!" I added, giving her our bunches of flowers; "you can get spring flowers in London all the year round."

I must say that Miss Stillings behaved very well. She never once said, "I told you so!" But, perhaps, she did not like to show off after what Jake said to her, when she came to tuck him up in bed that night.

SPRING BLOSSOMS IN PICCADILLY CIRCUS.

This is considered the best "stand" in London.

"You've scored off Win and me like anything, Miss Stillings," he said, rather sleepily.

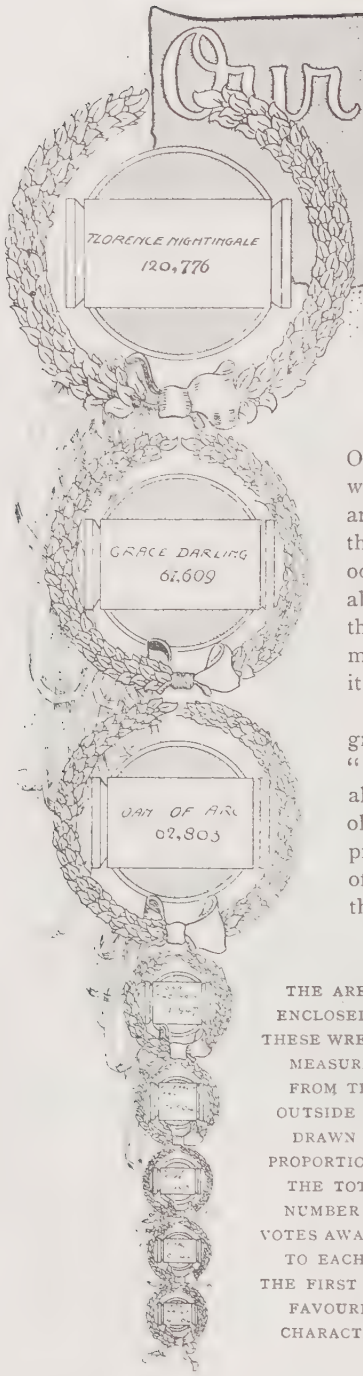
"Have I?" said Miss Stillings, kissing him.

"And you may behave like an ancient Roman as much as you like in future," added Jake, turning over on the other side.

Then he grunted. He could not have done more.

Our Voting Competition.

WITH DIAGRAMS BY HAROLD MACFARLANE.



THE AREAS ENCLOSED BY THESE WREATHS MEASURED FROM THE OUTSIDE ARE DRAWN IN PROPORTION TO THE TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES AWARDED TO EACH OF THE FIRST EIGHT FAVOURITE CHARACTERS.

OUR great Voting Competition is over at last, and the list of Prize-winners is settled. The energy and resource of our readers exceeded anything we had calculated upon, with the result that for six weeks the whole staff, and additional helpers, were quite overwhelmed. It occurred to us that our readers would realise the extraordinary facts about the magnitude of the competition if they were presented to them in diagram. Our artist, Mr. Harold Macfarlane, has, therefore, made a pictorial representation of his calculations, which will make it unnecessary for us to dwell further upon them.

We have been delighted with the spirit and temper in which the great majority of competitors entered the contest. One girl wrote :—"I shall feel quite surprised if I am lucky enough to get anything at all. Anyway, I have had plenty of fun out of it, for I have looked up old friends I haven't seen or heard of for years." [This girl *has* got a prize.] And this undoubtedly expresses the sentiment of the majority of competitors. Disappointment there must be, of course, but where the results are so clearly defined as they are in this competition, the knowledge that there has been "a fair field and no favour" will, in a spirit of sport, temper that disappointment. One word we must say about the number of votes set down to the different girls. In some cases it will be found to vary slightly from the numbers stated by the girls themselves. The *utmost* care has been taken over the counting and examination of votes. In some cases girls were found to have miscounted their votes; in other cases a few votes had to be disqualified for various reasons. In no case can the Editors enter into a correspondence with competitors on the subject of the number or quality of their votes.

A great number of silver charms were sent out to girls on getting their first twenty-five votes. It is quite possible, however, that some girl may have been overlooked, and we know that a certain number of charms were lost in the post. In any case where a girl is entitled to a charm and has not yet received it we shall be glad to hear from her, within a week, when a charm shall be sent.

Although the number of prizes in this competition is unusually numerous (thirty-four), we have added nineteen consolation prizes, with the object that every girl who sent in over four hundred votes might receive a small memento of her industry. This is exclusive of a set of prizes for our colonial readers.

THE PRIZE WINNERS.

The following is the full prize list. The postal addresses of the Prize winners are put all together on page 449, so that this list may stand out clearly :—

Prize Winner.	Total of Votes secured.	Favourite Character.	Prize.
1. A. Mary Field	3,242	Joan of Arc	£22 Bicycle.
2. D. M. Oliver	2,104	Frances Mary Buss	£10 10s. Evening Dress
3. Winifred M. Simpson	1,841	Florence Nightingale	Guinea Hat.
4. Hilda Sky	1,524	Grace Darling	"Una" Silk Blouse.
5. Nora Lynn	1,330	Grace Darling	"Alix" Silk Blouse.
6. H. Langrish	1,261	Jenny Lind	Lace Collar.
7. Elsa Pierpoint	1,090	Joan of Arc	Musical Glove Box.
8. Ellen Webster	1,063	Florence Nightingale	Shoes.
9. Mabel Hopkins	1,033	Joan of Arc	A Farey Hat.
10. Florence Benton		Joan of Arc	Fan.
11. Beatrice L. Dunn		Florence Nightingale	Lace Ruffle.
12 Theresa Harrington		Joan of Arc	Umbrella.
13. Annie Howlett		Florence Nightingale	Lace Handkerchief.
14. Winifred Grace Hudson		Lady Hallé	Scent.
15. M. C. Hayman		Florence Nightingale	Kodak Camera.
16. Ethel Dodd		Grace Darling	Blotter.
17. M. C. Woodall		Florence Nightingale	Ping-Pong Set.
18. Ella I. E. Thompson		Florence Nightingale	do.
19. Valerie Sawyer		Florence Nightingale	Postcard Album.
20. Beatrice Scott		Joan of Arc	do.
21. Gladys F. Evans		Florence Nightingale	GIRL'S REALM Volume.
22. P. Posener		Florence Nightingale	do. do.
23. Brenda Durant		Florence Nightingale	do. do.
24. Ismay Trimble		Grace Darling	Bead Necklace.
25. Edith Annie Nurse		Joan of Arc	do.
26. Anita Williams		Florence Nightingale	Nightdress Case.
27. Sylvia Vidal		Joan of Arc	Knitting Pins.
28. Florence L. Webb		Florence Nightingale	do.
29. Alice L. Jackson		Grace Darling	Case of Scissors and Thimbles.
30. Mrs. Ralph		Grace Darling	Set of Originals.
31. Annie Carmichael		Flora MacDonald	Set of Guild Colours.
32. Alice L. Smith		Frances Mary Buss	"Secret Chambers."
33 Mysie Johnston		Alice Ayres	"God and the King."
34. Evelyn Duncan Long		Grace Darling	"The Simpsons and We."

Consolation prizes of an original drawing from THE GIRL'S REALM have been awarded to the following :—

35. Mary H. Webb
36. Mabel Bayliss
37. Winifred Goodban
38. Helen Forster
39. Mabel Hewlett
40. Alithea Paul Dobbin
41. Lillie Hurtzig
42. M. Nottingham
43. Ivy Hill
44. Florrie Scott
45. Linda Samuell
46. F. Piercy Jones
47. May Shephard
48. Audrey Dick Cunyngham
49. Bertha MacComas
50. Ione Schneider
51. Dorothy Wallace
52. Eleanor Watts Jones
53. Alice O'Neill

THE WEIGHT OF THE COUPONS SENT OUT IN THIS COMPETITION WOULD EXACTLY BALANCE ELEVEN GIRLS (AGED 15) WHOSE AVERAGE WEIGHT WOULD BE ALMOST SEVEN STONE.

The packet of coupons contains 13 cubic feet of paper ; it weighs 6 cwts.

IF "THE GIRL'S REALM" GIRL COMBINED IN HERSELF THE 300,000 COUPON-WRITERS, HER APPEARANCE WHEN SHE STEPPED OFF THE COVER OF THE MAGAZINE AND, RAPIDLY ATTAINING THE HEIGHT OF 350 FEET, WALKED INTO TRAFALGAR SQUARE, WOULD BE SOMEWHAT STARTLING.

The Nelson Column would fade into insignificance beside her. Her weight would be almost 13,000 tons.

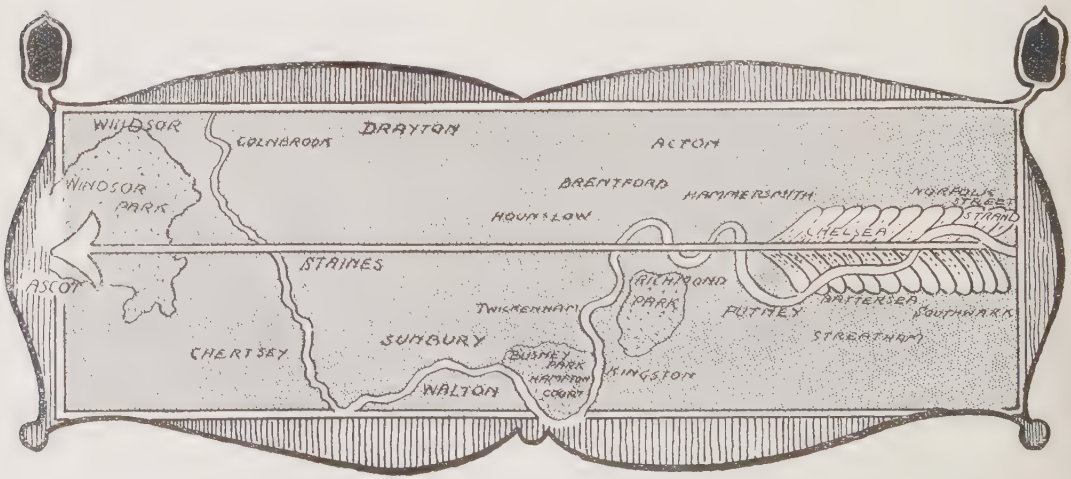
The following list is of the greatest interest, as it shows how the competitors (apart altogether from the additional votes they got from their friends) selected their favourite character:—

TOTAL OF GIRLS COMPETING, 2,876.

Favourite Character.	Votes.	Percentage.
Florence Nightingale	1180 which is	41·02
Grace Darling	651 ,, ,,	22·63
Joan of Arc	576 ,, ,,	20
Flora MacDonald	122 ,, ,,	4·24
Elizabeth Fry	81 ,, ,,	2·81
Alice Ayres	49 ,, ,,	1·70
Frances Mary Buss	38 ,, ,,	1·32
Lady Hallé	34 ,, ,,	1·18
Harriet Beecher Stowe	33 ,, ,,	1·14
Rosa Bonheur	32 ,, ,,	1·11
Jenny Lind	28 ,, ,,	0·97
Mrs. Siddons	21 ,, ,,	0·73
Elizabeth Barrett Browning ..	19 ,, ,,	0·66
Baroness Burdett-Coutts	12 ,, ,,	0·41

The following shows the total number of votes sent in (competitors' own votes as well as those they secured) for the different characters:—

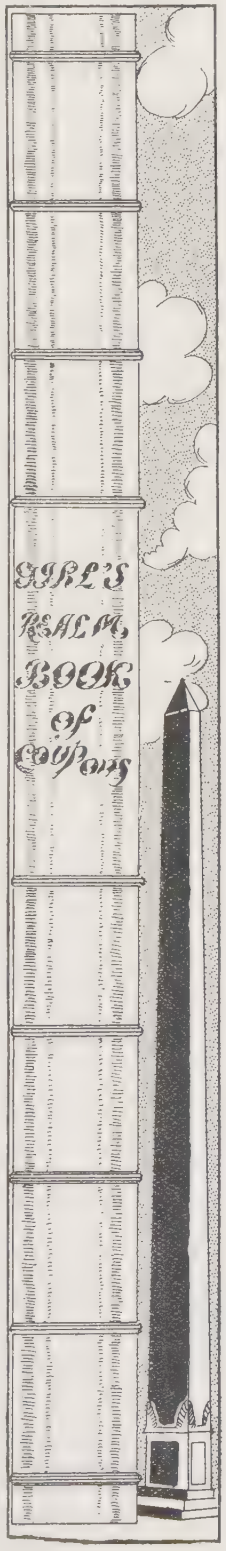
Favourite Character.	Total Votes.
1. Florence Nightingale	120,776
2. Grace Darling	67,609
3. Joan of Arc	62,803
4. Flora MacDonald	11,947
5. Elizabeth Fry	7,504
6. Alice Ayres	5,103
7. Frances Mary Buss	6,142
8. Lady Hallé	4,064
9. Jenny Lind	3,941
10. Harriet Beecher Stowe	3,082
11. Rosa Bonheur	2,948
12. Mrs. Siddons	1,876
13. Elizabeth Barrett Browning ..	1,768
14. Baroness Burdett-Coutts ..	1,098



PLACED END TO END "THE GIRL'S REALM" COUPONS WOULD EXTEND IN A CONTINUOUS RIBBON FROM NORFOLK STREET, STRAND, TO ASCOT—A DISTANCE OF 23⅜ MILES.

The following are the Names and Addresses of all Prize-winners in the Competition :—

A. Mary Field, 65, Talbot Road, Highgate, N. ;
D. M. Oliver, 97, Tollington Park, N. ;
Winifred M. Simpson, 8, Gorst Road, Wandsworth Common, S.W. ;
Hilda Sky, 28, Clifftown Road, Southend ;
Nora Lynn, 6, Brunswick Road, Kingston, Surrey ;
H. Langrish, 74, Richmond Road, Kingston ;
Elsa Pierpoint, 105, Brondesbury Villas, N.W. ;
Ellen Webster, Stock, Essex ;
Mabel Hopkins, Lucton House, Thetford, Norfolk ;
Florence Benton, School Lane, Swavesey, Cambs. ;
Beatrice L. Dunn, c/o the Hon. Mrs. Harley, Brampton Bryan, Herefordshire ;
Theresa Harrington, St. Wilfred's Boarding School, Cale Street, Chelsea ;
Annie Howlett, 47, Prospect Hill, Walthamstow ;
Winifred G. Hudson, 2, Dashwood Road, Stroud Green, N. ;
M. C. Hayman, Highfield, Chislett Road, West Hampstead ;
Ethel Dodd, Lansdowne House, Bedford ;
M. C. Woodall, 27, Broadway, South Shore, Blackpool ;
Ella I. E. Thompson, 49, Grandison Road, S.W. ;
Valerie Sawyer, Ranelagh House, Bounds Green, N. ;
Beatrice Scott, Ravenswood, Shernhall Street, Walthamstow ;
Gladys F. Evans, 47, The Chase, Clapham Common, S.W. ;
P. Posener, Noland House, Hazlitt Road, W. ;
Brenda Durant, 51, Downs Park Road, N.E. ;
Ismay Trimble, Newstead, Shakespeare Road, Bedford ;
Edith Annie Nurse, 53, Eastern Road, Romford ;
Anita Williams, The Chestnuts, Cottingham, East Yorks. ;
Sylvia Vidal, 4, Norland Square, Holland Park Avenue, W. ;
Florence L. Webb 61, Durlston Road, Upper Clapton, N.E. ;
Alice L. Jackson, Charterhouse, Teignmouth, Devon ;
Mrs. Ralph, Summerbank, Whitworth Road, South Norwood, S.E. ;
Annie Carmichael, 4, Windsor Place, Portobello, Edinburgh ;
Alice L. Smith, 37, Exeter Road, Brondesbury, N.W. ;
Mysie Johnston, 52, Melgund Road, Highbury, N. ;
Evelyn D. Long, Brunswick House, Gayton Road, Harrow ;
Mary H. Webb, 11, Acre Place, Stoke, Devonport ;
Mabel Bayliss, 126, Tufnell Park Road, Holloway, N. ;
Winifred Goodban, 41, Harley Street, W. ;
Helen Forster, Woodhill, Crowthorne, Berks. ;
Mabel Hewlett, Strickland House, near Wigan, Lancs. ;
Alithea Paul Dobbin, Knockrea, Blackrock Road, Cork ;
Lillie Hurtzig, 50, Alleyn Park, Dulwich, S.E. ;
M. Nottingham, 5, Esplanade Road, Scarborough ;



Ivy Hill, 57, Lennard Road, Penge, S.E. ;
Florrie Scott, Ravenswood, Shernhall Street, Walthamstow ;
Linda Samuell, 43, Bassett Road, North Kensington, W. ;
F. Piercey Jones, Burnside, Hoylake, Cheshire ;
May Shephard, 69, Hillfield Road West Hampstead ;
Audrey Dick Cunyngham, 62, Albert Gate Mansions, S.W. ;
Bertha MacComas, Howard House, Kingstown, Co. Dublin ;
Ione Schneider, 38, Stanhope Gardens, S.W. ;
Dorothy Wallace, Spa Hotel, Strathpeffer, N.B. ;
Eleanor Watts-Jones, 24, Addington Road, Bow, E. ;
Alice O'Neill, Shanes Castle, Co. Antrim, Ireland.

We thought it would be interesting to the other competitors to know how the first prize winner, who must have worked so hard, and have been possessed of great resource, secured the large number of votes which entitle her to the bicycle. The following is her reply to our note of inquiry :—

MY DEAR EDITOR,—

You ask me to give you an account of how I got so many votes. I hardly know myself how I managed it.

IF ALL THE COUPONS SENT IN WERE BOUND IN ONE VOLUME OF 300,000 PAGES, THE VOLUME WOULD STAND ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE FEET HIGH, AND WOULD QUITE DWARF CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE. THIS GREAT VOLUME WOULD CONTAIN SUFFICIENT WRITTEN MATTER TO FILL THIRTY-SIX VOLUMES AS LONG AS AN ORDINARY NOVEL, AND PRINTED MATTER TO FILL TWO HUNDRED AND FOUR VOLUMES OF SIMILAR LENGTH.

After persistently and remorselessly bothering all my friends and relations, some at school, some not, I was fortunate enough to obtain introductions to one or two Head Mistresses of girls' schools, who not only got me signatures from their own girls, but also asked other Head Mistresses to help me.

I found a good many girls were most anxious to vote for *me* instead of Joan of Arc! Others wished to save me the trouble of signing my own name by signing it for me.

Out of the many girls I asked to help me, only one girl refused. Another took three weeks to get me two signatures! but I did not mind waiting for them.

My highest ambition at first was two hundred votes, and even this I considered more than I could attain. By degrees, however, my aims grew loftier and I passed my final goal of 3,000 on December 28, 1901.

A. MARY FIELD.

THE CHILDREN'S OWN CORNER.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR LITTLE PEOPLE,—

I am sure you will all join with me in thanking May Maisey for sending me 19 shillings for our cot in the Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children. She says "I have been getting up a bazaar, and I have got 19 shillings, and I am going to send it to your Guild Cot." It is very sweet of May, far away in Switzerland (for she lives at the Villa Rosemont, Territet), to think of our little suffering child in England. I am sure that the love of the children outside the hospital is like an angel guarding the stricken little ones within. Thank you, dear May. Your money will be placed in the hands of those who do nothing but care and tend the little ones who are so heavily afflicted. May goes on to tell me that "she is going to have two tortoises. They are going to be sent from Geneva. One of our poor cross-bills is dead, and so also our dear little flycatcher, who came on our finger."

That is the saddest part of having pets. I remember when I was quite a little girl I had a pet canary. I had him from the time he was still inside his egg. A little blue egg, speckled over with tiny spots, over which the mother had brooded. How I watched that little egg, and would not let anyone disturb the anxious parent. And one day in its place there was a little bird, all wrinkled throat, and eyes like a pair of goggles. It was very ugly—there was no disguisingthe fact—as ugly as it could be. But its father and mother did not mind in the least. The mother spread her warm wings over it, and the father fed it and sang to it, and lo! one day it had grown into a beautiful bird with golden feathers, and a rim of white ones round its throat like a silver necklace. He became very fond of me. As soon as I appeared he would come down from his perch and begin to speak to me. He ate from my hand, and every day I would open its cage and out he would come and trot about the breakfast table. Well, one morning—how well I remember that morning—he was out as usual, and he flew down on the floor. I can see him still, a little golden ball hopping and looking about with its bright eyes from right to left. Father, who had finished his breakfast, got up. He did not see my little bird close to him. In backing his chair he backed up against him, and the next thing I saw was my pretty pet lying dead on the floor.

I have a letter, too, from Frances Harper Crewe, who tells me she went to a ball, and that "my sister and I danced fancy dances with other girls. One was a skirt dance. There were five girls. Two on one side dressed in pink and yellow, my sister and myself on the other side in white, and one was in the middle in green. Different coloured lights were thrown on us as we danced."

It must have been like a fairy dance; one of those dances that we read of in the quaint old story books, when the children would steal out in the night to some secret glade to see the fairies dance, flashing their white feet to the light of the moon. And when the fairies discovered the child watching them, they would throw a spell over it and take it down, down to the world below.

Here is a letter from Rockingham in Nova Scotia. The name of the writer is Clare Hamilton.

"Dear Editor,—I have not seen letters from Nova Scotia, so I thought perhaps you would like to hear from a little Nova Scotian. Rockingham is a very pretty little place, four miles from Halifax city. We are situated right below Bedford, on Bedford Basin, so we have any amount of swimming and boating. I have a wheel and cycle quite a lot. I have taken THE GIRL'S REALM for three years, and I think it is a splendid magazine for girls. I was so glad to see an account of how Hilda Cowham began. We have been so interested in her drawings. I love drawing and am going to be an illustrator."

Alexandra Munro Smith tells me that she was at the Hydro at Malvern during the Christmas holidays. And on the day after Christmas—

"The servants had a supper, dance, and games. Seventy-eight of them and their friends sat down to supper. We (the girls) all put our hair up and had long black dresses, caps and aprons, the boys all waited too; it *was* fun. Later on we all took part in 'The Belle of New York.' I was Fifi, and had to sing and dance, and my brother Jack was Mr. Bronson."

Then "Gladys" writes and tells me she is "hard up" and will I publish a story that she has written. How can I tell if I will publish it until I have read it? But I am afraid, dear "Gladys," that your reason is not a very good one. To write a story requires talent and very hard work. You must try and try again and never lose heart before you can succeed.

Then there are letters from Ethel Andrews, from Maisey Browne, from A. A., and others that I will answer another time. I always enjoy the letters of my children, telling me of themselves, their pets, of their sports and pastimes. I will always try to find room for these letters, and for any drawings or photographs that I think good enough to publish.

I am, my dear chicks,

Your friend, THE EDITOR.

SUSPICIOUS.

JOHNNY: "Molly, you can have my apple."
MOLLY: "Why, what's the matter with it?"

Chat with the . . . Girl of the Period.

BY THE EDITOR.

A Dream: A "Girl's Realm" Factory Girls' Home.

My Dear Girls—

I want to tell you of a visit I paid to a Factory Girls' Home. The place in which they gather is not really their home—which means an abiding-place of shelter and peace—but is a temporary gathering held in the Board School. I was asked there by the Secretary, who devotes to the well-being of the girls much time and much thought. It was a dreary night, and the neighbourhood through which we ploughed our way was very sordid and very noisy. When I got to my destination I was at once ushered into a large room full of brightness and animation. The girls had had their tea, and they were now in their places in a hall, in a corner of which stood a Christmas tree laden with gifts and decorated with fairy balls of gold and silver. Round it were presents of every description; gifts for the little children the girls had been allowed to take, gifts as a recompense for good behaviour; gifts for the girls who belonged to the club, who had attended regularly; and for the girls who had attended well, and had been good at the Bible Class, there were badges given and honorary mentions. How the girls managed to get their presents so quietly and without any hitch I cannot understand. They left their places, they were back in them in a trice, looking as bright and pretty as any girl could, and among them ran the toddling little children, with white pinafores and ribbons, and dear, chubby faces. It was wonderful the way the Chairman managed this babbling, merry squadron. Among them flitted the Secretary and the other ladies and gentlemen who work with her to bring civilisation and charm into these young lives. As I looked at these factory girls, sweet, bright, energetic as the daughters of a duchess might look, or any other educated girl whose thoughts are disciplined and whose movements are gentle, I felt that nothing but quite accidental circumstances occasioned the difference between them. How true were the words of Mr. Richard Whiteing, who had been asked to address them, when he said: "I was asked to come to speak to you, and it is you who are speaking to me, speaking by your bright faces, by the beautiful order that prevails, by the kindness you are showing to the little children who toddle about and whom you 'mother' so tenderly." Later on, when from among them three mando'ine players stepped upon the platform and played, and the scene grew in animation, I felt that the heartbreaking thing about all this was that the Home was threatened with extinction.

The Hon. Secretary, who has done wonders for the work, was about to retire, and there was no one to take her place. It is no easy thing to fill such a place, for the work demands a rare combination of the qualities of mind and heart and of a knowledge of the district—and what a district it is! As you leave the bright upper chamber, transformed for the occasion with its Christmas decorations, and especially transformed by the crowd of happy faces, you will probably—as it is a Saturday night—you actually, as a matter of fact, meet with two or three drunken bands of men and women, say, rather, of boys and girls, in your short walk to the railway station. Now this is what many of these girls might have been, this is what some of their fathers and mothers really are, for the most dreadful part of the truth is that they go down from this cheerful room, with all its fine spiritual associations, to houses in which such fathers and mothers, such brothers and sisters live, as pigs in their stye. Just think of it, if we could transfer it by an effort of imagination to our personal experience. Think of an evening well and pleasantly spent—say in good talk, in laughter, in the interchange of friendly offices—and after all that, the home-coming to such horrors. Could one in ten thousand of us endure it, with all our helps of culture, means, and other resources, against the permanence of hateful impressions? The poor have a fine saying about the difference between "a fat sorrow and a lean sorrow." By this they mean that some people are able to face their sorrows with a thousand assuagements. If they live in a roomy house they can seek the solitude of their room when anything unpleasant happens in the family circle. If they are heavily hit by

affliction they can seek change of scene, the whole world of beauty in Nature and in Art is open to them. They can pine with a difference in Paris, in Rome, in Naples, on the Riviera. Their book-shelves are laden with all sorts of consolation, in light and heavy doses, from Marcus Aurelius and À Kempis to the latest novel. They can go to the play at a moment's notice. They have the run of the picture galleries. They can find congenial society at the club; in short the "fatness" of the sorrow is ever there, as a precious security against the worst. Their moral life is all easy-chairs, and although weariness can reach us even in easy-chairs, it is not so acute as when it comes to us in hard ones.

But these poor people have nothing of all that. For all of them the home has no shelter of library, study, or boudoir; nothing awaits them there; they have to face their troubles without any chance of escape. Really, when one thinks how bravely these girls persevere in order, sobriety, cheerfulness, in neatness of appearance and hopefulness, one could look upon them with a sort of awe, as one looks upon Arctic navigators, heroes of shipwreck and of battle, whose constancy of heroic temper has stood the greater trial, and this disposition to reverence is all the greater because they do not know how much reverence they deserve. By the very circumstances of the case, by their happy ignorance, we might say, of the more favoured conditions of life, they are without any power of comparison, and they go home from their modest glories of the platform, the prize, the gift, and the mention, to assist a drunken parent into bed without an idea that they are doing anything in particular.

Now I want to help those of them who might otherwise faint by the way. I dream, with the aid of my girls, of providing for those brave factory girls a house of their own, a veritable place of shelter and of improvement to which they can always retire when the day's work is done, in which they will always find a friend to receive them, and where there will be books and papers and a room in which they can chat and work, and another where kind friends will hold classes and teach them what they want to know. My dear girls, you will help me to attain this object I am sure, when you think of all that such a home would do for these factory girls. I do not want it to be the work of the Guild only. I want every girl who hears of it to send me any contribution, however small, towards it, every girl to feel that as she is sending me her pence or her shillings, that she is testifying her affection for the dear and good Queen under whose reign she was born, and showing her affectionate solicitude to girls less privileged than herself, who need a home to keep them from the dangers of the streets, and who will find there something of the larger life of the mind, of physical culture, and of friendly intercourse.

I must now return to the problems that you have sent in. There are many, and I select a few typical ones. Here is one:—

An act has been committed which concerns the honour of a school. Every attempt has been made to discover who has done it. A knows who has committed that act; ought she to reveal the name of the offender?

Take no steps until she has made repeated appeals to the offender. Surely these in the long run should have their effect. There is the less reason for hurry, as the honour of the school is a very different thing from the honour of a single person who might lie under a false imputation of the offence. In that case A would have to act very promptly in bringing the truth to light. It would be very shocking indeed to have an innocent girl tortured with a false charge. But the school can better afford to wait, and while it is waiting A should make every effort to urge the real offender to an honourable course. If this failed, there would still lie, as a matter of duty, the appeal in confidence to the head mistress, who might safely be trusted to temper Justice with Mercy to an erring girl. But she must be careful to make none but the head mistress her *confidante*.

Here is another:—

An offence has been committed at a school. Each girl has been asked if she has done it. A knows who the culprit is; the child has denied all knowledge of it. Ought A to tell who it is?

If it is only a slight offence it is much better to let the matter pass in silence, taking care, however, to let the child know what injury she does to herself as well as to her schoolfellows by keeping silence. But all of us ought never to forget that the exposure of another creature's small fault may easily degenerate into mere tale-bearing. It is only in great emergencies that any of us should come forward as informers. The individual conscience is the best corrective in the long run, but A must take care not to let her silence be mistaken for sympathy.

D. Wright, Flora, and some others send problems of the same kind. "Hughina's" is interesting, but is scarcely a problem. There can be but one answer to it. She should claim a revision of the papers.

I have awarded the prize to E. M. FLETCHER, 4, Rowena Street, Great Lever, Bolton, Lancs., as being the problem that calls forth more perplexity of feeling.

Suppose Augusta was a higher class girl, and Belinda a lower class child of 8 who did something wrong. A was the only one in the school who knew who had done it. The head mistress said that if nobody owned up she would punish the whole school: B said nothing, and when each one was asked, B in her turn answered that she had not done it. A does her best to get B to own up by telling her how wrong it was to tell an untruth as well as do the thing, and that the punishment would not be any worse than she would get as it is, because the teacher will be more lenient if she confesses, and that she will save the rest of the girls from being punished. Still B will not speak. Should A say no more? or, should she tell the teacher, and get her to try and make the child understand how wrong it is to tell a story?

By so doing she will probably get the name of "tell-tale," and may not do the child any good, besides making the other girls suspicious of both herself and B, who will then be known in future as a story-teller, whether she always tells the truth or not.

There are many letters, among others from Connie Hudson, Vera Whishaw, "Mistletoe," that I would like to answer, but I must defer doing so to my next chat. Good-bye, my dear girls.

Your affectionate friend, THE EDITOR.

SCENES IN ELFLAND—I.

From an Original Drawing by SYBIL C. BURNSIDE.

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE FIFTH.

THE HANGING OF THE CRANE.

"They want no guests, to come between
Their tender glances like a screen, . . .
They want no guests; they needs must be
Each other's own best company."

—*See Editor's note on page* 468.

A Play given by a Royal Princess,

And acted by Her Royal Relations.

By HELMET STAG ARCHER.

It is not often that one catches a glimpse of royal families in anything but official garb on an occasion which requires a certain stereotyped public appearance. One supposes, of course, that there are times when a king thinks of himself only as husband or father or lover or friend, times when he seeks diversion and freedom from the loneliness of court life, but this side of him is rarely seen—much more rarely photographed. A real incognito is at such times preserved.

Royal ladies, too, must have some interest, some diversion, altogether outside of the service of the State. Some find it in riding, driving, shooting, writing books and essays, or in charitable work. No one is more deeply interested in charity than the Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and Norway, and her interest is of the warm, personal, encouraging kind. The fashionable beneficent funds which each year require stated sums of money from the royal purse are, of course, supplied, but to her this is not true charity. She has always believed that the woman who gives without knowing personally the recipient of the gift, and gaining an understanding of his needs and aims from his own lips, does hardly half her duty. Much good can be done by personal contact. Sympathy quickens ambition. A kindly manner removes the sting of humiliation which any one of pride, however much in need of assistance, often feels at having to accept benefits from a stranger.

Of all the charities in which the Princess Victoria is concerned, she is most interested in the institution conducted by the Elizabeth Sisterhood in Stockholm. The little ones who are its wards receive more visits from her than any of her intimate friends, and there are few of these little waifs whom she cannot call by name.

There are not many waifs in Norway and Sweden. The population is not cosmopolitan nor migratory. A large majority of the peasant families have lived on the same land for many generations, tilling the barren soil or eking out a living through fishing along the coasts. Such men when they marry settle down for good and all and take both pride and pleasure in the hardy children who are to carry on the struggle of life when their parents' burdens have been laid down on the threshold of death.

The Elizabeth Sisterhood, located in the capital of the kingdom, cares for such as are helpless and have no one anxious to give their welfare a thought, and from a small beginning has increased its sphere of usefulness until it is now not only one of the most popular, but also one of the most important charities in the realm.

A little while ago it became necessary to raise a large sum of money, for the Sisters had

LUDWIG MEETS ELIZABETH ON AN ERRAND OF CHARITY, AND FALLS IN LOVE WITH HER.
The Crown Princess Victoria and the Crown Prince of Sweden and Norway are the principal characters.

made great plans for the future, and nothing is so distressing as having a good idea, well analysed and thought out, which must fail, not through lack of energy or courage, but through inability to secure the means needed to carry it out. In this predicament the advice of the

THE DELEGATION AT THE COURT OF ANDREAS II.
Prince Karl of Sweden, whose stature and physique are remarkable, can be seen in the centre of the stage.

Crown Princess was sought, and it was she who conceived the idea of giving a public play. But this play was to be unique—the Crown Princess was to play the leading part. This fact was whispered about among the Sisters and their charges, and finally became public property. A few weeks later the Princess announced that she had persuaded her husband, the Crown Prince, to play the leading male rôle, and that his brother, Prince Karl, a giant in stature, would also be included in the cast. Several of the Princess's best friends were also given parts, and many of the children under the care of the order began to rehearse for what was to them the event of their lives.

Naturally society took an interest in the project when it was learned that the principal actors were to be recruited from the royal family. Social leaders showed their eagerness to be among those concerned in the ultimate success which was now assured. The choosing of the play to be presented had its difficulties, for it was desired that many of the wards of the Sisterhood should take part. No Swedish or Norwegian play could be found exactly suited to the needs of the occasion, and so, "The Holy Elizabeth," a popular German fairy-play, was finally selected from the many under consideration.

The advance sale of seats was so large that the original plan of securing one of the regular theatres had to be abandoned and the Stock Exchange of Stockholm was temporarily converted into an auditorium capable of seating the immense crowd. After the stage carpenters and scene painters had pronounced their work completed, the hall was decorated by the most fashionable women in the capital's society, and the brokers who sat in the tiers of boxes the night of the performance had been able to recognise only the exterior of their building, so great was the change wrought by the first inroad of femininity on the stronghold of the speculator.

ELIZABETH IS COMPELLED TO FLEE WITH HER CHILDREN FROM THE COURT OF HER BROTHER-IN-LAW.

The scene was both brilliant and cosmopolitan. In the front of the boxes were the dowagers and their daughters. Seated behind them or lounging against the walls were diplomats in evening dress, with ribbons and orders denoting their position. Here and there the square shoulders and golden epaulettes of an officer added a touch of emphasis. The more socially favoured of the students, and the wealthiest bankers and brokers, in evening dress undecorated by sashes, medals, and orders, toned down the general effect. In the chairs, back of the boxes, were crowded all the people of Stockholm who could afford the price of admission.

Near the stage a space had been reserved for the Sisters and those of their wards who had not been included in the cast. Presently they arrived, and, forming in line at the door, marched up the centre aisle, unconscious of the stir they were creating.

The story of the play itself is simple and

THE FAREWELL OF ELIZABETH (THE CROWN PRINCESS VICTORIA) TO LUDWIG (CROWN PRINCE OF SWEDEN AND NORWAY) WHO IS SETTING FORTH TO THE CRUSADE.

pathetic, though time and the spreading of the legend have enshrouded it with mysticism and miracle, as is the case with most folk-lore.

In the early part of the thirteenth century there was born to Andreas II., King of Hungary, and his wife Gertrude, a daughter whom they named Elizabeth, a name meaning in Hebrew "full of godliness." Her childhood was remarkable for piety and devotion, and legend relates many miracles which centred around her.

When she was only four years old, the Duke of Thuringia sent a delegation to ask her hand in marriage to his son Ludwig. A great feast was celebrated, and when the delegation took its leave, the dowry of the little Princess was carried away. During her childhood her pious actions had highly incensed her future mother-in-law, so that when the time of her marriage approached, great opposition was shown. Upon the accession to the Thuringian throne of young Ludwig, he was appealed to by the nobility of the land to choose a wife of a more world-wise disposition, but he loved Elizabeth dearly, so in spite of all opposition they were married. After the wedding they became the most devoted couple, and Ludwig now began to imitate his wife in devotion, justice and charity. Elizabeth could not reconcile her state robes and great dinners with her deep religion, and on state occasions she would reconcile her soul to her outward gorgeous robes by wearing a prickly garment of horsehair next to her skin. Her charity was her main object; she tended the sick, and made clothes for them. In church she took her seat among the poor and beggars.

Her ordinary dresses were very modest, and when once some great nobleman came to visit her from her father's court, her husband feared lest she should not appear as her rank demanded. Dressing herself in her best, which was very poor however, she went to greet her guests, and miraculously appeared to them bejewelled and arrayed in finery. Her beauty was wonderful.

Once when going on a cold winter's day to the wedding-feast of her sister-in-law, arrayed in a most beautiful silk cloak as etiquette re-

THE GOOD ELIZABETH DISPENSES FOOD TO STARVING PEASANTS.

quired, she met a very worn-looking, scantily-clad beggar. Thinking of nothing but his immediate wants, she gave him her cloak. Unable to appear before the guests, she went to her room, where the cloak was found hanging in its place.

In the winter of 1226, Frederick II., Emperor of Germany, undertook the Italian campaign. Ludwig followed him. While he was away a great famine occurred, and Elizabeth divided all her money among the poor.

The next year, the King ordered a crusade. Ludwig joined him. But in Italy, on the Island of St. Andreas, he died.

Elizabeth was driven from her castle in the dead of a winter's night by her brother-in-law, and with her children fled to a cabin close to the cloister of the Franciscans. But her hardships had exhausted her vitality, and while only in her twenty-fifth year she died, attended by the good sisters of the convent. Later she was canonised by the Church, and her memory came to be recognised as standing for all that was good and charitable in woman.

That the play would be a financial success was never in doubt, and a handsome sum was realised.

The royal actors did so well that had they been unknown I believe the audience would still have enjoyed the play for its own sake. The Crown Princess Victoria, naturally sympathetic and charitable, made an ideal Elizabeth, while the Crown Prince, as Ludwig, did not have to simulate his love for her. Prince Karl's splendid physique and graceful carriage held the attention whenever he was on the stage, and those who had minor parts contributed to the finished character of the whole production. All in all, the entertainment was a great success, and the audience, among them the King and Queen, the Sisters and their wards, went home well pleased.

THE DYING VISION OF ELIZABETH.

A SCHOOL STORY.

By EMMA BROOKE.

Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

ALICIA RUSSELL was head girl in the Misses Eliot's school at Westwater-on-the-Sea; and, being a young lady of a managing character, she had carried it her own way amongst her fellow-pupils during the three or four years of her residence. Within the last six months only had her sway been met by any opposition worth the name.

Miss Russell's method was a simple one. She first expressed an opinion which upon the face of it appeared sound and so much in accordance with right feeling, that it won unanimous agreement; then having, in her own words, "established a standard in the school," she used her own interpretation, and insisted upon it in so searching a manner, that many who had assented readily enough to the sentiment, found themselves severely dealt with in the application; but it was difficult to pluck up courage enough to debate a position won with a flourish and held by prestige. Moreover, Alicia's Russell's interpretation of her own law was flattering to some and won their support.

The sentiment to which Alicia, in her first term, secured universal adhesion, was this: "The high standard of this school must be kept up by our resolving that it shall remain *select*." That was not bad for a girl between fourteen and fifteen; the elder girls replied "certainly," and ranged themselves on her side. The Misses Eliot were far from disapproving, though the method by which Alicia would apply the sentiment did not occur to them. Of much that goes on in the schoolroom the principals cannot be cognisant, and would with difficulty suppress; but though a difference in opinion must be fought out between the girls themselves, and the victory be decided in the playground and the class-room, the colour of the school depends, in the first instance, on the principals. The Misses Eliot desired that their school might become primarily the resort of daughters of the higher classes, and during many prosperous years, they had maintained a somewhat exclusively society tone. It was this circumstance which, unfortunately, lent support to Alicia Russell's pretensions.

The first and earliest of Miss Russell's interpretations of the words "select" and "high standard," was that to anything of the nature of Trade, the aristocratic cold shoulder must be turned. The shy new-comer, therefore, was subjected to searching inquiries as to the social standing of her parents and other relatives, and according to her replies was the future position assigned her in Alicia Russell's favour; and this signified the prospect of either an agreeable passage through the school terms, or the reverse. If anyone could produce a titled uncle or grandfather, her future was kindly assured by Miss Russell's smile. But the method of earning the family bread was the crux: the professions of the Church and the Bar were allowed, as also of the Army or Royal Navy; it went worse, however, with medicine and the law; literature and the arts were scarcely permitted, even when accompanied by honours; but, above all, the taint of the mill-owner, the merchant, the farmer, or business of any kind, was rigorously repudiated under the

word "Trade." "Above all things we must keep *select*," said Alicia to her favourites.

In order to explain the ascendancy of Alicia Russell—now an accomplished young lady in her eighteenth year—a sketch of her appearance and bearing will be necessary. She was tall, and since her fourteenth year had had a grown-up look and a manner so self-possessed, that most people were deceived into taking her for older than she was. She was a pretty, showy girl, with a gift for good dressing, and a power of neat speech and effective carriage—an *aplomb*, an air of *savoir-faire*—which would probably stand her in good stead in society, and which made her really formidable to the newer and younger pupils who failed to secure her favour; but where she wished to please she had a taking manner, a smack of the world and of confidential exclusiveness, very flattering where she chose to bestow it, while her conversation, being always clever and beyond her years, attracted the young creatures who were anxious to prepare themselves for that "Society" which they longed after before they could reach it. Besides these traits, and a judicious use of them, Alicia was accomplished, above all she sang and played well; it happened that these powers were objects of great emulation amongst the pupils. Her chief weapon on behalf of the "Standard," was, however, distinctly unamiable; under a rigid courtesy she would skilfully exhibit a veiled contempt: this was eminently successful in rendering miserable the lives of those whose social position she judged to be below her measure.

By the time she had been at Westwater three years, there had grown up around her in the school a spirit of unworthy emulation—of foolish heart-burning and as foolish elation—which rendered Alicia's power to flatter and torture, to create cliques, and corresponding desolation, really formidable.

An inquiry what was Miss Russell's own position in that great world by which she measured the school, would be natural: this was rather taken for granted than questioned. A campaign against "Trade" is a convenient method for establishing aristocratic pretensions, and "Russell" a convenient name by which to uphold them.

"Look in the Peerage," Alicia would say; "you will find our name there."

Those who did so, undoubtedly found it duly inscribed. In the lessons on "the Prime Ministers of the Queen," which were given one term, Alicia involuntarily blushed at the name of "Lord John Russell." Afterwards she was glad, for Miss Emily Eliot looked at her and smiled.

"We are the same family," said Alicia carelessly later on, when her companions rallied her.

But during the last three months, Alicia's dominion had begun to totter. A ray of light and hope penetrated the cloud which hung over the spirits of those girls whose families could boast no other distinction than refinement and quiet worth. It came with the arrival of Hester Johnson to the school.

"'Johnson'!" exclaimed Alicia, covering both ears with her hands. "How plebeian! What can Miss Eliot be thinking of? We must make very searching inquiries."

Hester Johnson was a bright girl, over sixteen years of age. She could not, strictly speaking, be considered pretty, but she was undoubtedly charming. Of middle-size, with rather broad shoulders, her well-shaped head was so gracefully poised that, when she chose to carry it high, she had a distinguished air. Her eyes were dark brown, with a spirited spark in them, her colour clear and bright, and under her readily-smiling mouth she had a well-cut decided chin. She was sitting in the school-room during recreation, somewhat apart from the others, the day after her arrival, watching her new and as yet unknown companions with a keenly observant air, when Alicia Russell approached. Instantly a hush fell upon the girls; the inquisition was, they knew, about to begin. With the whole room as audience, Alicia was more anxious to procure applause for her cleverness in cross-examination, than to consider the feelings of her victim; she liked to triumph, and to add to her reputation for power of the kind. Hester turned her unsuspicious face in the idea that a kindly attention towards a new-comer was the object of this advance. After a few innocent preliminaries, out darted the first inquisitive thrust:

"INSTANTLY A HUSH FELL UPON THE GIRLS; THE INQUISITION WAS, THEY KNEW, ABOUT TO BEGIN."—(p. 462.)

H. COWHAM.

"From what county do you come?"

"From Daleshire," responded Hester, readily.

"A very good county," observed Alicia judicially; "there are many good county families there. I come from Daleshire myself."

"I knew it," returned Hester.

"How so?" asked Alicia, feeling flattered.

"Because you have the Daleshire accent in your speech."

Hester intended no malice, but Alicia coloured angrily, and those girls who had suffered under the tyranny of the "Standard," tittered a little. The cross-examination now proceeded with a touch of rancour; Hester's doom was already sealed, and the whole school listened in breathless silence while the hunt for the Trade-taint continued. It took a little time to change the unsuspicious pleasure in Hester's face to an expression of doubt and bewilderment; then that cleared away and a look of intense amusement followed. She turned on her seat and faced her questioner with such perfect coolness of manner and such an admirably capable air, that it seemed positively supernatural to the more timid of Alicia's oppressed companions.

"Ah! I understand!" said she, smiling; "you want in school-girl fashion to know all about me? My name is Hester Johnson—"

"I don't know the name," interrupted Alicia coldly.

"You do not? That is odd, considering how very common it is. We are not county people at all in the sense of belonging to County Society. My family is an old yeoman family; we belong essentially to the land and the people; but through the energy of my near forbears, we have risen to be a well-known firm of cotton manufacturers. I believe my father is rich, but I cannot tell you the amount of his income."

When Hester Johnson began reeling off this information with a bright, amused air, instead of having it extorted from her, Alicia felt as though the rapier had been snatched from her hand and was being applied to herself. When, however, she ended her sketch of the family history with this unblushing candour as to cotton, Alicia's amazement and horror were genuine.

"'*Risen!*'" she re-echoed; "you said '*risen* to be a firm of cotton manufacturers?'"

"Yes. I said so."

"A manufacture is a trade."

Alicia spoke slowly and distinctly, so that everyone might comprehend her verdict.

"Why not?" asked Hester.

"Oh! Nothing!" returned Alicia, rising, with a cold smile on her face.

The girl had been foolish enough to confess that her family had "risen" to a trade! What more did one want? Surely she had *placed* herself effectually! As a matter of fact, some quite new and independent judgments were being formed in the hearts around Alicia.

"Stay!" cried Hester, looking after Alicia. "You have questioned me, but have not even told me your name. Is that courteous?"

"Oh! *I* am a Russell," answered Alicia, carelessly.

"I know the name," said Hester, smiling.

"Perhaps you do," said Alicia, grandly.

"It happens to be the name of our washerwoman. She is a most respectable woman," said Hester, mirth dancing in her eyes.

"Pooh!" said Alicia, impatiently.

But the whole school with one accord burst into a hearty laugh. Alicia could hardly believe her ears. The laugh was certainly against her. She looked round angrily, then once more addressed Hester:

"My family," said she, "live in the Vale of Sudbury, on the estate of Sir Robert Earne-Hilton. My father is a friend of the baronet."

And then she walked away in a decided manner, as though taking for granted that the victory was hers. But she was far from comfortable. Hester lived in the same county, and Alicia began to wonder anxiously whether she had been foolish as well as false, in allowing it to be assumed that the name she bore necessarily connected her with an aristocratic family. In reality Alicia had no more claim to such a connection than a man called Stuart has a claim to belong to the royal race who ruled over us under that name.

In spite of her disastrous encounter with the wit of Hester Johnson, Alicia's domination could not easily be thrown off. What happened was that a counter-influence was created, to which those girls who had been most tormented by the rule of exclusiveness, rallied joyfully. Hester had great advantages; she possessed such rare musical ability that it put the talents of the rest of the school in the shade, and made it impossible to ignore her;

she was clever and capable in other ways. But the greatest of her advantages was that she used her gifts well, infusing them with a spirit of sweet-natured helpfulness towards others; she possessed in a remarkable degree the beneficent power of extracting from others their best selves, and placing them in the best possible position in regard to the outside world. Her presence and influence resembled a sunny day after a long black-frost. She seemed to make no effort, but to spread around a cheery atmosphere wherein each one's brightest moods flourished as spontaneously as wild-flowers open under the summer sun. By the end of her first term, the school was divided into two camps: the one sullen, pretentious and preoccupied; the other friendly, active, full of innocent pleasure and good comradeship.

Not, however, until the end of Hester's second term, did the event take place, which may be compared to a decisive and final victory, after a long military campaign. At the beginning of that term only one new-comer had arrived; her name was Marion Dacres, and she was older than girls usually are when they appear at a new school. Before her arrival, however, the fact crept out that the new-comer was only to remain at the school for a single term, in order to finish her preparation for an examination that would qualify her, should she pass it successfully, for the position of a governess or high-school teacher. The expenses of this term at Miss Eliot's school were being defrayed by a relative. When Marion arrived, and Hester saw that she wore black, and that, moreover, her face was full of a very delicate and sensitive refinement, she made up her mind to put out all her power to protect her from the insolence of Alicia's inquiries. And she succeeded. Alicia was not again inclined to scorch her wings in the fire of Hester's wit. She left Marion Dacres severely alone.

"We need make no inquiries *there*," said she to her followers; "the standard of the school is clearly running down when the place is made the preparation ground for governesses. Let her pass to the other camp without inquiry. For myself, I leave, also, the end of this term. And when I leave——"

She shrugged her shoulders to finish the phrase.

Marion Dacres proved to be the shyest and most reticent of creatures, also one of the gentlest. She yielded at once to the kind hand of friendship that Hester stretched out to her. Nevertheless, after six weeks of friendly intercourse, Hester knew no more of her family connections than she had known the first day. She asked no questions, and Marion made no confidences; the one thing she talked of eagerly and openly was her future career in the profession she had chosen. Meanwhile to Alicia, the thought of leaving school was rather a harassing one. She wished that her "position" in the great world was as assured as she had succeeded in representing it to be. She wished she were more secure of an invitation to Sir Robert Earne-Hilton's "place," to which her references at school had been frequent. In reality, the intercourse between the baronet's family and her own was limited to her father. Certainly, Lady Earne-Hilton bowed to her mother, but the acquaintance scarcely went further. Possibly, when she returned home for good, things might alter for the better; she hoped Lady Earne-Hilton might call, and that she would be invited to the Park. It would, indeed, be delightful if she could get intimate enough to row about on the great lake with Lionel Earne-Hilton and his sister! It would, indeed, be pleasant if Miss Earne-Hilton took a fancy to her, and they became friends! For Sir Robert was not only the great man of the district, he was also a statesman who had an important position in the political world as his wife had in the social, and, though Sudbury Park was deserted for some part of the year, at another the house would be crowded with distinguished guests, and an entry to it meant an entry into some of the pleasantest social circles of London.

Marion Dacres was one of those people who are slow to give their confidence and friendship, but who, once it is won, become constant and faithful friends. Hester's disinterested kindness made a deep impression, and she began to return it with warm affection. The career to which she was looking forward formed a constant topic of conversation between them.

In Hester's eyes nothing could be more honourable and delightful than such a prospect.

"I, too, shall work," said she; "I believe that it will not be necessary in one sense; but I intend to make my life useful to others in some way or another."

"If I were rich," said Marion, "I should still work. I should make some plan, and spend myself in carrying it out—some plan for the happiness of others."

"*When* you are rich," said Hester, smiling, "let me join in with you. I fancy we should work well together."

"I promise that. But, Hester, dear, I never can be rich. I shall only have what I earn."

Then she confided to Hester that the decision to work for her living had been her own.

"I am pretty well connected, as things go," said she, "and when my father died my relations would gladly have supported me. But—just because I am deeply attached to them—I did not wish to trespass on their kindness, or to diminish in the least degree their respect for me. All that I would accept was this final course of tuition to fit me for my work."

Before Marion made this confidence, and in so doing struck a compact of friendship with Hester, the term was well advanced in its second half. In the course of the conversation she let slip, unconsciously, the name of the relations to whose kindly feeling she had referred. It seemed to loose itself from her tongue by chance, and Hester made no remark about it. But her eyes danced with mirth.

"If Alicia Russell only heard the name!" thought she. "How she would worry Marion for further confession!"

By the time the term reached the last fortnight, the atmosphere in the school had changed marvellously, and Miss Eliot noted and approved it. Hester's sunny influence had spread so much that some of the members of Alicia's camp had deserted to the enemy, having observed that life there was decidedly a livelier and merrier affair. For under Alicia, a frozen repose upon aristocratic pretensions and a bickering for precedence, seemed the only fun. A few, however, remained staunch, retaining their exclusive tone and cold superiority around Alicia, just as a heap of snow will sometimes linger long after the fields are green. Alicia's armoury was now in a scornful silence; she placed barriers of icy contempt, in particular, between herself and Hester and Marion; the existence of the latter she seemed determined to ignore.

"If I were to meet Alicia Russell after we have left school, I should not *dare* to bow!" Marion would remark to Hester.

As a matter of fact, she was too much absorbed in hard study to care about Alicia's contempt; but she observed it, and as much as possible kept out of her way. Hester, on the other hand, made one or two genuine attempts to put an end to the ridiculous and unworthy warfare; but her generous overtures met with no response. Of course, Alicia was not comfortable, and she even began to hail the approaching termination of her school life.

"The school has gone down hopelessly this last term," she observed to her favoured companions; "it is time I left."

It was just before the examinations that the event occurred which introduced something of the nature of an explosive bomb into Alicia's citadel.

One morning, in the middle of a history class held in preparation for the approaching examination, a servant entered and whispered something to her mistress. Miss Eliot, looking rather alarmed, summoned Marion to her side, and went with her out of the room. The class proceeded. But after a few minutes, study was disturbed by the sound of a great cry of distress. Miss Emily Eliot, who had remained in the room, rose in agitation, and followed her sister. A minute or two later, the servant re-appeared, and called for Miss Hester Johnson. The whole class-room was left in a state of surmise to make what they could of the sounds of hurrying to and fro in the house. At the end of an hour the noise of a departure in the hall was heard, and the closing of the front door. When Hester returned to the class-room her eyes were red.

"We shall not see Marion any more," said she; "I do not know how it has happened, but the death of a near relative has caused her to be called away suddenly."

Alicia looked particularly uninterested.

"Is it her mother?" asked someone.

"Marion has no mother, I believe," said Hester; "it is a cousin."

"I wonder," said Alicia, "that Miss Dacres should allow her studies to be interrupted by the death of a cousin, seeing how important this examination is to her."

The term went on towards its close. Almost daily Hester received a letter from Marion, but she did not impart the contents. It was Miss Eliot herself, whether innocently or of set purpose, who supplied the information as to Marion's trouble, which reduced Alicia's citadel to a mournful reminder of the unexpectedness that may lurk in life and bring our foregone conclusions to absurdity. The hour was lunch-time, and the whole school, day-boarders as well as boarders, were assembled.

"So," said Miss Eliot, addressing herself to Hester, "you and Alicia are likely to be near neighbours this vacation, and very often in the future."

"Yes," said Hester, in a low voice, and looking down in her plate.

"I am going home," said Alicia, rather haughtily. "I was not aware that Miss Johnson lived in Sudbury."

"Miss Johnson is going to stay there on a visit with Miss Dacres, or, as I should now call her——"

"I do not even know where Miss Dacres lives," said Alicia, calmly.

"Very near to you, my dear," said Miss Eliot, deliberately; "you probably know Sudbury Park, Sir Robert Earne-Hilton's place?"

Alicia looked up sharply, and turned rather pale.

"Of course I know Sudbury Park," said she.

"Mrs. Johnson has very kindly given Hester permission to stay there with Marion this vacation, at her request."

There was dead silence in the room; every eye that could manage it turned towards Alicia.

"'IF I WERE RICH,' SAID MARION, 'I SHOULD STILL WORK.'"—(*p.* 466.)

Her ears began to buzz painfully, but she struggled for composure. Hester, very red indeed, was looking down at her plate.

"I suppose the Earne-Hiltons are away from home," Alicia ventured, utterly unable to comprehend the situation.

"My dear! Of course *not*," said Miss Eliot.

"Then I suppose Miss Dacres is going to be governess or companion to Miss Earne-Hilton," said Alicia, slowly.

Nothing could be more unpleasant than such a notion! She would meet Marion Dacres in the village, in the lanes; see her at church in the company of Miss Earne-Hilton. It was very awkward, and if Hester Johnson was going too, that was worse! What could be the meaning of it? The silence and attention in the school-room deepened.

"My dear Alicia, don't you read the papers?" asked Miss Eliot.

"Not often, Miss Eliot," stammered Alicia; "but why?"

"You did not, then, see in last week's *Post*, the death, by drowning, of Sir Robert's only son and daughter? It was a very sad affair. They met with an accident while rowing together on the lake in Sudbury Park."

"I had not heard," said Alicia, with a sudden burning flush, and a feeling of fire in her heart.

"Then you possibly are unaware that Marion Dacres is Sir Robert's niece? By the death of her cousins she is now the sole heiress of his estate. She will assume the name of Earne-Hilton in addition to her own. Upon receiving the sad news, she proceeded at once to Sudbury Park at the earnest request of the bereaved parents, who are greatly attached to her, and, of course, she will make the place, for the future, her home."

Alicia's heart beat so quickly that she could not speak. The more ill-natured gave vent to a low titter; but at that Hester looked up sharply and reproachfully, and it died away. Had she had her wish, the news should not have come to Alicia in so public a manner.

"Oh, how terribly maladroit I have been!" exclaimed Alicia, in the bitterness of after-reflection, when she perceived how her persistent folly had closed that door to the interesting "society" at Sudbury Park, which she had ardently desired should be opened to her, and which all this time had been opening in the guise of such a simple thing as the natural kindliness of ordinary schoolgirl companionship.

There was, indeed, plenty of occasion for sad thought. A selfish managing spirit usually outwits itself. Life, as a quiet sower, goes on dropping good seed; but only in the good ground of a receptive genial spirit is the good fruit likely to fructify.

OUR LONGFELLOW DRAWING.

"THE HANGING OF THE CRANE," our Frontispiece this Month.

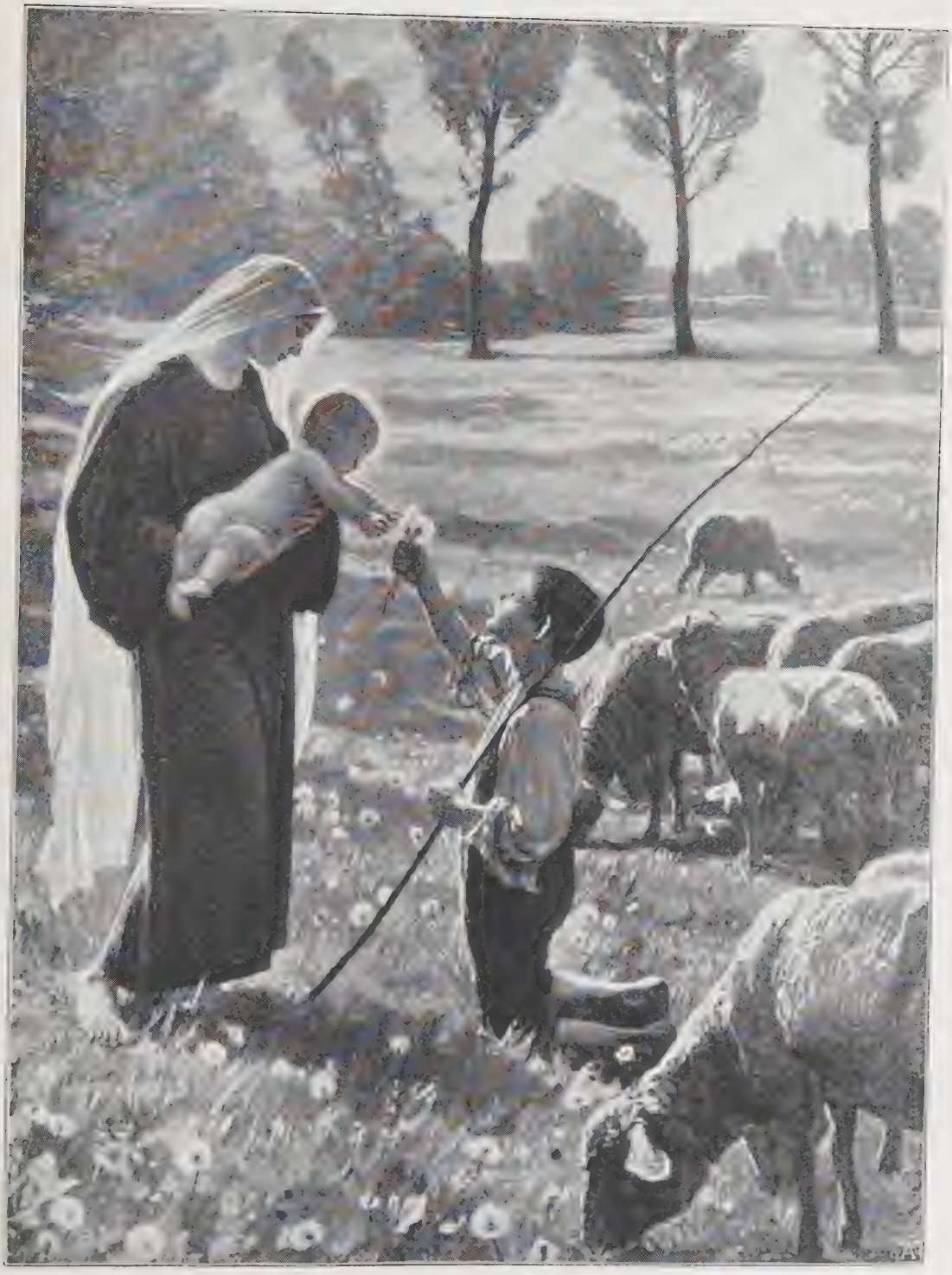
THE French have an expression "*pendre la cremailliere*," "hanging of the crane," which is used to express a house warming. The poet imagines a series of beautiful home-pictures connected with a newly-founded household "Like a new star just sprung to birth." He first sees the newly-married pair left alone by all the guests, the light of love shining over them.

> "They want no guests to come between
> Their tender glances, like a screen,
> And tell them tales of land and sea,
> And whatsoever may betide
> The great forgotten world outside;
> They want no guests; they need must be
> Each other's own best company."

The picture fades away and a new one forms on the mist. A guest is with them. They entertain a little angel unawares who rules by right of his helplessness, drums upon the table with his spoon and drops it on the floor. Then, as this small despot and king of the household is being carried away by his nurse, this picture vanishes and another takes its place. A second guest is by the boy's side, a sister, "A Princess from the Fairy Isles."

The children are happy together and ignore "the woe of the world rolling on with all its freight of troubled souls." Then the scene changes and round the table is gathered a goodly company of youths and girls. Their high hopes and fears make the world a bright and adventurous place. Once more they vanish under the gathering mists, and upon the vapour we see a picture of the two left alone as they were upon the evening of their wedding day. Sons and daughters have gone to other houses and to gladden other hearts. A son is a sailor, another is in the army, and the mother reading of the battle dreads to see the name she loves in those "chronicles of pain." The last picture now forms itself on the curtain of enfolding vapours. It is that of the golden-wedding day. The house is crowded with children, and grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. The ancient bridegroom and the bride "serenely smiling on the scene."

Other Longfellow pictures that have appeared are "Evangeline" (November, 1901); "The Shipbuilder's Daughter" (Christmas, 1901); "Hiawatha" (January, 1902); "The Children's Hour" (March, 1902). The remaining two pictures will be "Priscilla and John Alden" and "The Village Blacksmith."



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[*Franz Hanfstaengl, Munich.*

THE VISION OF THE SHEPHERD BOY.

THE HOME OF WAX AND SURGERY.

By JOHN E. DOYLE.

Illustrated from Photographs by FOULSHAM AND BANFIELD.

JUST beyond the southern side of Waterloo Bridge there is an establishment which is devoted to the exercise of a profession in which the young Briton must always take an interest.

During the past forty years, thousands of dolls have crossed the threshold, each in a state of breakdown of more or less severity. The Dolls' Hospital is a wonderful institution of its sort; every patient who enters it is enabled in a very short time to leave it, entirely cured! There is no death rate.

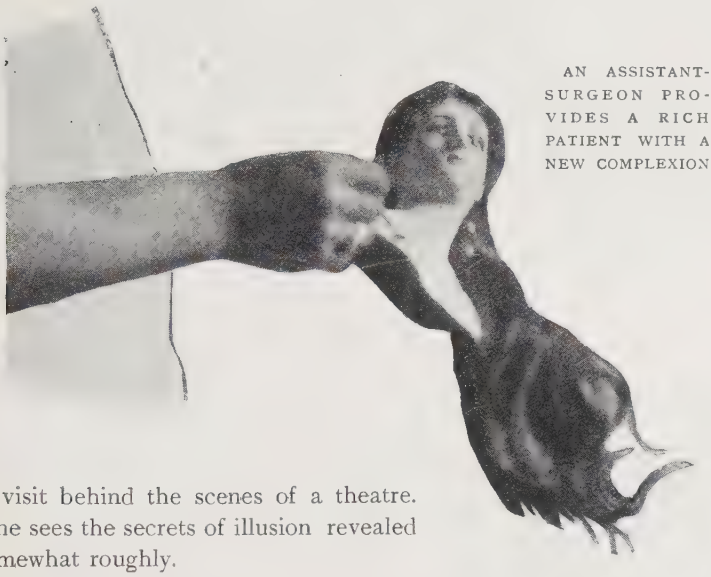
The name of Wheelhouse, London's celebrated doll doctor, may have faded from the memories of those who have graduated from the nursery. But to the children of to-day and yesterday, that name proves a solace in the hour of bereavement, when, by some terrible accident, a beloved doll has lost an arm, a leg, or even a head, or its speech, or becomes sleepless! The infantile mind may be seared with sorrow, but a promise that the injured dolly shall be sent for treatment to the famous doctor never fails to bring comfort and peace.

A MEMBER OF THE HOSPITAL STAFF IS KEPT PERMANENTLY BUSY MAKING NEW WIGS FOR LADY DOLLS WHO HAVE LOST THEIR HAIR.
Every hair of the doll's head is grafted in singly.

"Things have very much altered in the doll world," said Mr. Wheelhouse, during a stroll through the "wards" of his hospital. "In my father's time, dolls were of the simplest construction. A pot of glue, some string, and a few yards of wire, were sufficient in most cases to accomplish a satisfactory cure. Now, however, it is a different matter. What with movable eyes and mouths, many-

jointed arms and mechanically-worked legs, phonographic apparatus and contrivances for imitation breathing, to repair a doll is sometimes quite a formidable undertaking."

A walk through a dolls' hospital is rather like a visit behind the scenes of a theatre. One sees the secrets of illusion revealed somewhat roughly.



AN ASSISTANT-SURGEON PROVIDES A RICH PATIENT WITH A NEW COMPLEXION

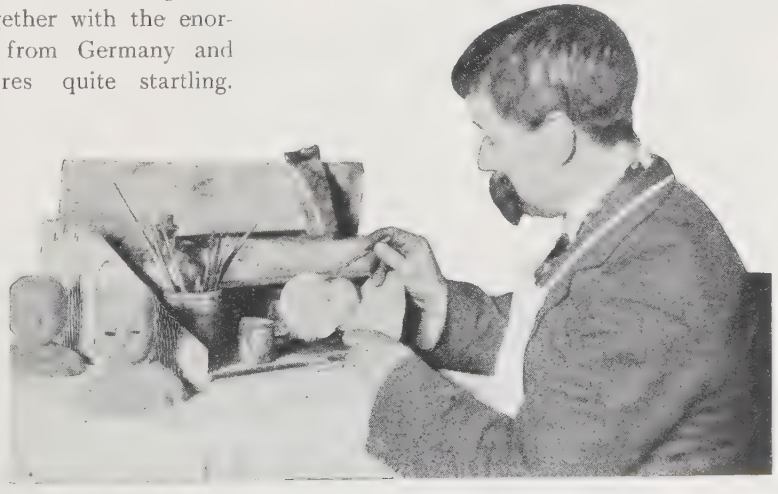
Here are scores of boxes of legs, arms and heads; there are immense cases of artificial eyes looking far less beautiful than when set under irreproachable brows. Legs without bodies; bodies minus legs. Some in the most extraordinary stages of surgical operations.

The staff of workers experience no lack of subjects for their skill. The annual output of British doll factories, together with the enormous number imported from Germany and France runs into figures quite startling. Five millions would probably fall short of the entire sale of dolls in the United Kingdom during a twelvemonth!

It was very interesting to watch the "assistant surgeons" at their various tasks. A doll — reminding us somewhat of Kipling's lady who was a "rag, a bone, and a hank of hair"—is taken in hand. The legs are dangling wearily from their respective sockets, the arms have all but disappeared. A snap of a pair of pliers, a slight tug, and lo! head, body, arms, and legs have parted company, and lie in the worker's lap. But a length of bright copper wire is lifted, passed through the joints, meeting neatly inside a gaping hole in the "skull," and twisted securely. The once dislocated wreck becomes a thing, if not exactly of beauty, at least, well on the way to that consummation.

One of its movable eyes is missing. The patient is handed over to another worker. The mechanism is taken out of the head, and an eye to match the remaining one is soon picked out of a box containing thousands of imitation optics. A dab of wax, and the new eye is fixed, with the correct stare, upon the T-shaped wire, replaced in the head, secured with a further application of wax, and winks mightily as if to assure itself that it is in full working order.

The doll now only requires a wig to complete



—WHILE ANOTHER FURNISHES FRESH EYEBROWS TO A POOR DOLL INJURED IN A FIRE.

its personal appearance. It is passed on to an assistant coiffeur. If the doll belongs to a cheap species, a dab of glue and a bit of golden tow is considered sufficient. The more expensive dolls are far differently dealt with. Human hair is used for the purpose. Each hair in front is grafted into the wax singly. A "nurse" takes the hairless

A "CORNER" IN EYES.

Patients are frequently received into the hospital suffering from the loss of one or even of both eyes.

AN "EMERGENCY CASE."

The Head Surgeon pronounces it a serious case, but holds out a hope of recovery to the distracted mother.

beauty on her lap. In her left hand she holds a lock of beautiful hair. This is wrapped, at the upper part, in a piece of silk. Taking a sharp-pointed instrument in her right hand, the "nurse" deftly inserts a single hair in the wax, pressing down the latter over the "root," securely fastening it.

"Where do your 'patients' come from?" I asked the "doctor."

"London sends its hundreds weekly; we do the really practical repairing for many of the big retail shops, as well as receiving directly from private houses. Very many come from the country.

"Dolls are becoming more expensive every year. There are so many elaborations nowadays, when many dolls can walk, talk, sing, dance—in fact, do anything but think!" continued Mr. Wheelhouse, smiling. "The necessary mechanism adds to the price. Often as much as five guineas is paid for a first-class doll. Thousands cost a guinea each. It is consequently cheaper to pay 'doctor's fees' for repairs than to buy new ones.

London ladies come to the "hospital" accompanied by their little girls carrying a "patient," and anxious for advice as to the treatment necessary. Many a pathetic scene takes place on

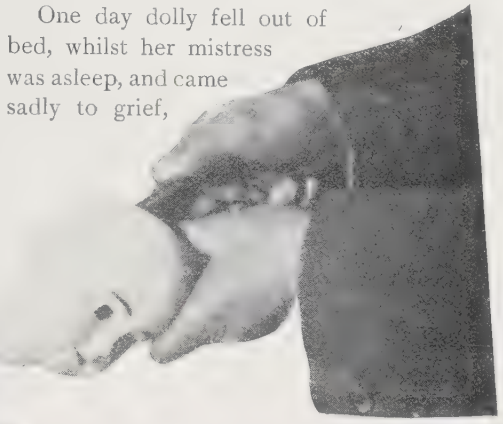
such occasions. The little visitor hands her doll to Mr. Wheelhouse for examination. Very often this cannot be done without a seemingly brutal instant removal of leg, arm, or head. The child, shocked at thus seeing her darling so roughly dealt with, bursts into tears of passionate sympathy.

Dolls are often handed down from generation to generation. It is a fact that the same dolls have paid periodical visits to the hospital during the last forty years! It does not matter a bit that the cost of repairs is often more than would buy a new and better doll. The family preserve it and keep it for their children's children to play with—until it becomes a sort of heirloom, rendered valuable by its association of days gone by.

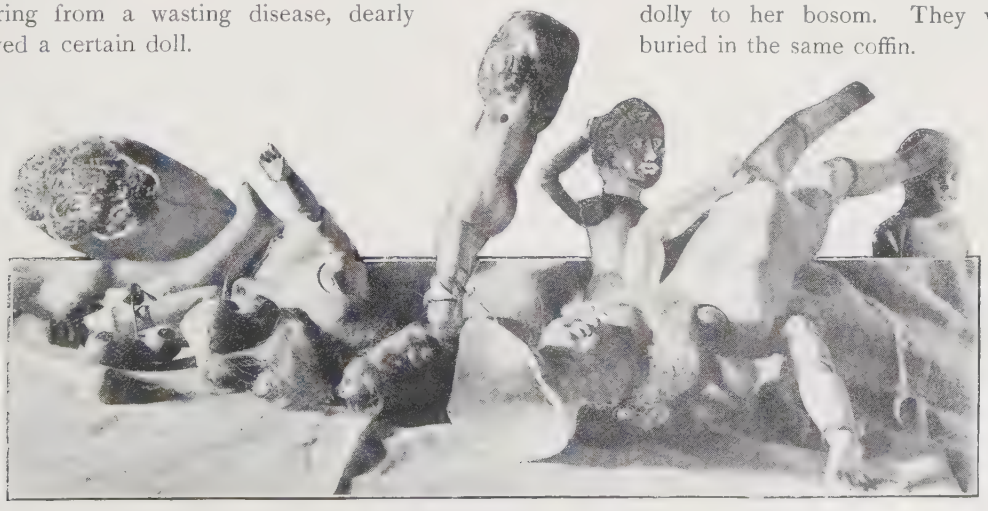
Mr. Wheelhouse tells a pathetic story in connection with a "patient" that was sent to his "hospital." A poor little girl, suffering from a wasting disease, dearly loved a certain doll.

She was entirely confined to her bed, and the poor little thing used to play and chat with her doll as if it were alive.

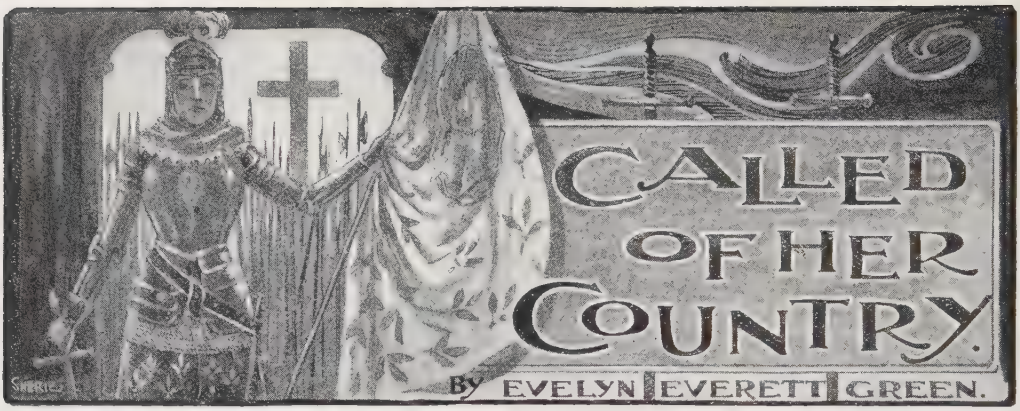
One day dolly fell out of bed, whilst her mistress was asleep, and came sadly to grief, her wax face being smashed. The little "mother," on waking up, was so much affected by the terrible loss that it nearly killed her. They brought her another doll—but she wouldn't look at it. At length someone suggested the "Doll's Hospital." Forthwith the broken dolly was taken there. No time was lost over the job. So well was the repairing executed that on the return home of the cured dolly, the dying child went into raptures. The parents assert that it was the means of prolonging their little one's life. A few weeks later, the child passed quietly away, clutching her beloved dolly to her bosom. They were buried in the same coffin.



"YOUNG HEADS ON OLD SHOULDERS": A DELICATE OPERATION.
The surgeon fixes a new head on to the body of a middle-aged patient.



PATIENTS WAITING FOR THE DOCTOR.



The story of the "Angelic Maid," as related by a Knight who followed her fortunes to the end.

Illustrated by E. F. SHERIE.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW THE MAID ACCOMPLISHED HER MISSION.

SHALL I ever forget that evening—no, not if I live to be a hundred!

June had well-nigh passed ere we began our march from Gien—that triumphant march headed by the King and the Maid—and July had run half its course since we had been upon the road. For we had had a great tract of country to traverse, and a large army must needs have time in which to move itself.

And now upon a glorious golden evening in that month of sunshine and summer-tide, we saw before us—shining in a floating mist of reflected glory, the spires and towers, the walls and gates of the great city of Rheims—the goal of our journeyings—the promised land of the Maid's visions and voices!

Was it indeed a city of stone and wood which shone before us in the level rays of the sinking sun? I asked that question of myself; methinks that the Maid was asking it in her heart; for when I turned my eyes upon her, I caught my breath in amaze at her aspect, and I know now what it is to say that I have looked upon the face of an angel!

She had dropped her reins, and they hung loose upon her horse's neck; her hands were clasped together in a strange rapture of devotion. Her head was bare; for she often gave her headpiece to her page to carry for her, and in the evenings did not always replace it by any other covering. Her hair had grown a little longer during these months, and curled round her face in a loose halo, which in the strong and ruddy light of the setting sun, shone a glorious golden colour, as though a ray of heavenly light were enmeshed within it. But it was the extraordinary brightness of those great luminous eyes, the rapt and intense expression of her face which arrested my attention, and seemed for a moment to stop the triumphant beating of my heart. It was not triumph which I read there, though there was joy and rapture and peace, beyond all power of understanding. It was the face of one who sees heaven open, and in the wonder and awe of the beatific vision forgets all else, and feels not the fetters of the flesh, heeds not those things which must needs intervene ere the spirit can finally be loosed to enter upon blessedness and rest, but soars upwards at once into heavenly regions.

The town of Rheims lay before us. The inhabitants were pouring forth to meet us. We saw them coming over the plain, as we watched the walls and buildings, glowing in the mystic radiance of the summer's evening, loom up larger and grander and sharper before us. It was no dream! And yet who would have thought it possible three months ago? In mid-April the iron grip of the English lay all over the land north of the Loire, and the south lay supine and helpless, stricken with the terror of the victorious conqueror. Orleans was at its last gasp, and with its fall the last bulwark would be swept away; all France must own the sway of the conqueror. The King was powerless, indolent, ready to fly at the first approach of peril, with no hope and no desire for rule, doubtful even if he had the right to take upon himself the title of King, careless in his despair and his difficulties.

The army was almost non-existent; the soldiers could scarce be brought to face the foe. One Englishman could chase ten of ours. The horror as of a great darkness seemed to have fallen upon the land.

And yet in three months' time what had not been accomplished!

The King was riding into the ancient city of Rheims, to be crowned King of France; Orleans was relieved; a score of fortresses had been snatched from the hands of the English. These were fleeing from us in all directions back to Paris; where they hoped to make a stand against us, but were in mortal fear of attack; and now it was our soldiers who clamoured to be led against the English, and the English who fled helter-skelter before the rush and the dash of the men whom heretofore they had despised. And all this was the work of yonder marvellous Maid—a girl of seventeen summers, who, clad in white armour, shining like an angelic vision, was riding at the King's side towards the city.

He turned and looked at her at the moment my gaze was thus arrested, and I saw his face change. He put out his hand and touched hers gently; but he had to touch her twice and to speak twice ere she heard or knew.

"Jeanne—fairest maiden—what do you see?"

She turned her gaze upon him—radiant, misty, marvellous.

"I see the Land of Promise," she answered, speaking very low, yet so clearly that I heard every word. "The chosen of the Lord will go forward to victory. He will drive out the enemy before the face of him upon whom He shall set the crown of pure gold. France shall prosper—her enemies shall be confounded. What matter whose the work, or whose the triumph? What matter who shall fall ere the task be accomplished—so that it be done according to the mind of the Lord?"

"And by the power of the Maid—the Deliverer!" spoke the King, a gush of gratitude filling his heart, as he looked first at the slight figure and inspired face of the Maid, and then at the city towards which we were riding, the faint clash of joy-bells borne softly to our ears. "For to you, O my General, I owe it all; and may the Lord judge betwixt us twain if I share not every honour that I may yet win with her to whom I shall owe it!"

But her gaze was full of an inexplicable mystery.

"Nay, gentle Dauphin, but that will not be," she said; "One shall increase, another shall decrease—hath it not ever been so? My task is accomplished. My work is done. Let another take my place after to-morrow, for my mission will be accomplished."

"Never!" spoke the King firmly and earnestly, and when I heard him thus speak my heart rejoiced; for I, no more than others, believed that success could attend the King's further efforts without her who was the inspiration of the army, and the worker of these great miracles which had been wrought. How often have I wondered since—but that is no part of my story. Let me tell those things which did happen to us.

How can I tell of our entry into Rheims? Have I not spoken in other places of other such scenes, often in the early dusk of evening, when whole cities flocked out to meet the Maid, to gaze in awe and wonder upon her, to kiss her hands, her feet, her knees, the neck and flanks of the horse she rode, and even his very footprints in the road, as he moved along with his precious burden?

As it was there, so was it here—the same joy, the same wonder, the same enthusiasm. The King was greeted with shouts and acclamations, it is true; but the greater admiration and wonder was reserved for the Maid, and he knew it, and smiled, well pleased that it should be so; for at that time his heart was full of a great gratitude and affection, and never did he seek to belittle that which she had wrought on his behalf.

Thankfulness, peace, and happiness shone in the eyes of the Maid as she rode; but there was a nearer and more personal joy in store for her; for as we passed through the town, with many pauses on account of the greatness of the throng, pouring in and out of the churches (for it was the vigil of the Madelaine), or crowding about the King and the Maid, she chanced to lift her eyes to the windows of an inn in the Place, and behold her face kindled with a look different from any I had seen there before, and she looked around for me, and beckoning with her hand, she pointed upwards, and cried in tones of strange delight and exultation:

"My father, fair knight, my father! I saw his face!"

Now, I knew that Jacques d'Arc had been greatly set against his daughter's mission, and it had been declared that he had disowned her, and would have withheld her from going forth, had such a thing been within his power. She had never received any message of love or forgiveness from him all these weeks, though her two younger brothers had joined the army, and

were always included in her household. So that I was not surprised at the kindling of her glance, nor at the next words she spoke.

"Go to him, my friend; tell him that I must needs have speech with him. Ah, say that I would fain return home with him when my task is done, if it be permitted me. Go, find him speedily, ere he can betake himself away. My father! My father! I had scarce hoped to look upon his face again!"

So whilst the King and the Maid and their train rode on to the huge old palace of the Archevêché, hard by the Cathedral, I slipped out of my place in the ranks, and passed beneath the archway into the courtyard of the old inn, where the Maid declared that she had seen the face of her father looking forth.

I had not much trouble in finding him; for already a whisper had gone forth that certain friends and relatives of the wonderful Maid had journeyed from Domrémy to witness her triumphant entry into Rheims. Indeed, some of these had followed us from Chalons, all unknown to her, who would so gladly have welcomed them. Chalons, though a fortified town, and with a hostile garrison, had opened its gates to us without resistance, feeling how hopeless it was to strive against the power of the Maid. The wonder and awe inspired by her presence, and by her marvellous achievements, had sunk deeply into the spirits of these simple country-folk, who had only heretofore known Jeanne d'Arc as a gentle village maiden, beloved of all, but seeming not in any way separated from her companions and friends. Now they had seen her, white and glistening, in martial array, riding beside a King, an army at her back, acclaimed of the multitude, the idol of the hour, a victor in a three months' campaign, the like of which never was before, and methinks can never be again.

So now, when I stood face to face with the rugged *prud'homme*, the father of this wonderful Maid, and told him of her desire to speak with him upon the morrow, when the King should have received his crown, I saw that many emotions were struggling together in his breast; for his soul revolted yet, in some measure, at the thought of his girl a leader of men, the head of an army, the friend of kings and courtiers, whilst it was impossible but that some measure of pride and joy should be his at the thought of her achievements, and in the assurance that at last the King, whom loyal little Domrémy had ever served and loved, was to receive his crown, and be the anointed sovereign of the land.

"She desires speech with me? She, whom I have seen riding beside the King? What have I to do with the friends of royalty? How can she consort with princes and with peasants?"

"Let her show you that herself, my friend," I answered. "We, who have companied with her through these wonderful weeks, know well how that she is no less a loving daughter, a friend of the people, for being the friend of a King and the idol of an army. Give me some message for her. She longs for a kind word from you. Let me only take her word that you will see her and receive her as a father should receive his child, and I trow that will give her almost the same joy as the knowledge that by her miraculous call she has saved her country and crowned her King."

I scarce know what answer Jacques d'Arc would have made, for he was a proud, unbending man, and his face was sternly set whilst I pleaded with him. But there were others from Domrémy, entirely filled with admiration of the Maid, and with desire to see her again; and their voices prevailed, so that he gave the answer for which I waited. He would remain at the inn over the morrow of the great function of the coronation, and would receive his daughter there, and have speech with her.

"Tell her that I will take her home with me, if she will come," he spoke; "for she herself did say that her work would be accomplished when the crown was placed upon the King's head. Let her be true to her word; let her return home, and become a modest maiden again beneath her mother's care, and all shall be well betwixt us. But if pride and haughtiness possess her soul, and she prefers the company of courtiers and soldiers to that of her own people, and the life of camps to the life of home, then I wash my hands of her. Let her go her own way. She shall no longer be daughter of mine!"

I did not tell those words to the Maid. My lips refused to speak them. But I told her that her father would remain in the place till she had pleasure to have speech with him; and her eyes kindled with joy at hearing such news, for it seemed to her as though this would be the pledge of his forgiveness, the forgiveness for which she had longed, and for the lack of which none of her triumphs could altogether compensate.

There was no sleep for the city of Rheims upon that hot summer's night. Although the coming of the King had been rumoured for some time, it had never been fully believed possible till news had been brought of the fall of Troyes, and

"AND SO AT LAST THE KING WAS ANOINTED AND CROWNED . . . THE WORK OF THE MAID WAS INDEED ACCOMPLISHED!"—(*p.* 479.)

the instant submission of Chalons. Then, and only then, did citizens and prelates truly realise that the talked-of ceremony could become an accomplished fact, and almost before they had recovered from their amazement at the rapidity of the march of events, courtiers brought in word that the King and his army were approaching.

So all night long the people were hard at work decorating their city, their churches, above all their Cathedral, and the priests and prelates were in close conference, debating what vestments, what vessels, what rites and ceremonies should be employed, and how the lack of certain necessary articles, far away at St. Denis, could be supplied out of the rich treasuries of the Cathedral.

As the dawn of the morning brightened in the east, the sun rose upon a scene of such splendour and magnificence as perhaps has seldom been witnessed at such short notice. The whole city seemed one blaze of triumphal arches, of summer flowers, of costly stuffs, and rich decoration. Every citizen had donned his best and brightest suit; the girls and children had clothed themselves in white, and crowned themselves with flowers. Even the war-worn soldiers had polished their arms, furbished up their clothes, and borrowed or bought from the townsfolk such things as were most lacking; and now, drawn up in array in the great square, with tossing banners, and all the gay panoply of martial glory, they looked like some great victorious band—as, indeed, they were—celebrating the last act of a great and wonderful triumph.

As for the knights, nobles, and courtiers, one need not speak of the outward glory of their aspect—the shining armour, the gay dresses, the magnificent trappings of the sleek horses—that can well be pictured by those who have ever witnessed a like brilliant scene. But for the first part of the day, with its many and varied ceremonies, there was lacking the shining figure of the Maid; nor did the King himself appear. But forth from the Palace of the Archevêché rode four of the greatest and most notable peers of the realm, attended by a gorgeous retinue; and with banners waving, and trumpets blowing great martial blasts, they paced proudly through the streets, between the closely-packed ranks of soldiers and citizens, till they reached the ancient Abbey of Sainte Remy, where the monks of Sainte Ampoule guard within their shrine the holy oil of consecration in that most precious vial which, they said, was sent down from heaven itself for the consecration of King Clovis and his successors.

Upon bended knees and with bared heads these great peers of France then took their solemn oath that the sacred vial should never leave their sight or care, night or day, till it was restored to the keeping of the shrine from which the Abbot was about to take it. Then, and only then, would the Abbot, clothed in his most sumptuous vestments, and attended by his robed monks, take from its place that holy vial, and place it in the hands of the messengers—Knights Hostages, as they were termed for the nonce—and as they carried it slowly and reverently forth, and retraced their steps to the Cathedral, accompanied now by the Abbot and monks, every knee was bent and every head bowed.

But all the while that this ceremony was taking place, the Maid was shut up in her room in the Palace, dictating a letter of appeal to the Duke of Burgundy, and praying him in gentle, yet authoritative terms, to be reconciled to his King, join hands with him against the English foe, and then, if need there were to fight, to turn his arms against the Saracens, instead of warring with his brethren and kinsmen. I trow that this thing was urged upon her at this time, in that she believed her mission so nearly accomplished, and that soon she would have no longer right to style herself "Jeanne the Maid," and to speak with authority to princes and nobles. As yet she was the appointed messenger of Heaven. Her words and acts all partook of that almost miraculous character which they had borne from the first. I will not quote the letter here; but it is writ in the page of history; and I ask of all scholars who peruse its words, whether any village maiden of but seventeen years, unlettered, and ignorant of statecraft, could of herself compose so lofty and dignified an appeal, or speak with such serene authority to one who ranked as well-nigh the equal of kings. It was her last act ere she donned her white armour, and passed forth from her chamber to take part in the ceremony of the coronation. In some sort it was the last of her acts performed whilst she was yet the deliverer of her people. When I looked upon those words, long after they had been penned, I felt the tears rising in mine eyes. I could have wept tears of blood to think of the fate which had befallen one whose thoughts were ever of peace and mercy, even in the hour of her supremest triumph.

How can my poor pen describe the wonders of the great scene, of which I was a spectator upon that day? Nay, rather will I only seek to speak of the Maid, and how she bore herself upon that great occasion. She would have been content

with a very humble place in the vast Cathedral to-day; she had no desire to bear a part in the pageant which had filled the city and packed the great edifice from end to end. But the King and the people willed it otherwise. The thing which was about to be done was the work of the Maid, and she must be there to see all, and the people should see her, too—see her close to the King himself, who owed to her dauntless courage and devotion the crown he was about to assume, the realm he had begun to conquer.

So she stood near at hand to him all through that long, impressive ceremony—a still, almost solemn figure in her silver armour, a long white velvet mantle, embroidered in silver, flowing from her shoulders, her hand grasping the staff of her great white banner, which had been borne into the Cathedral by D'Aulon, and beside which she stood, her hand upon the staff.

She was bareheaded, and the many-coloured lights streamed in upon her slim, motionless figure, and the face which she lifted in adoration and thanksgiving. I trow that none in that vast assembly, who could see her as she thus stood, doubted but that she stood there the accredited messenger of the Most High. The light from Heaven itself was shining on her upturned face, the reflection of an unearthly glory beamed in her eyes. From time to time her lips moved, as though words of thanksgiving broke silently forth; but save for that she scarcely moved all through the long and solemn ceremony. Methinks that she saw it rather in the spirit than in the flesh; and the knights and nobles who had poured in from the surrounding country to witness this great function, and had not companied with the Maid before, but had only heard of her fame from afar, these regarded her with looks of wonder and of awe, and whispering together, asked of each other whether in truth she were a creature of flesh and blood, or whether it were not some angelic presence, sent down direct from Heaven.

And so at last the King was anointed and crowned! The blare of the thousand trumpets, the acclamations of a vast multitude proclaimed the thing done! Charles the Seventh stood before his people, their King, in fact as well as in name.

The work of the Maid was indeed accomplished!

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE MAID WAS PERSUADED.

THE ceremony was over. The Dauphin stood in our midst a crowned and anointed King. We were back in the great hall of the Archevêché, and the thunders of triumphant applause which had been restrained within the precincts of the sacred edifice, now broke forth again, and yet again, in long bursts of cheering, which were echoed from without by the multitudes in the street and great open Place, and came rolling through the open windows in waves of sound like the beating of the surf upon the shore.

The King stood upon a raised daïs; his chiefest nobles and peers around him. He was magnificently robed, as became so great an occasion, and for the first time that I had ever seen, he looked an imposing and a dignified figure. Something there was of true kingliness in his aspect. It seemed as though the scene through which he had passed had not been without effect upon his nature, and that something regal had been conveyed to him through the solemnities which had just taken place.

The Maid was present also; but she had sought to efface herself in the crowd, and stood thoughtfully apart in an embrasure of the wall, half concealed by the arras, till the sound of her name, proclaimed aloud in a hundred different tones, warned her that something was required of her, and she stepped forward with a questioning look in her startled eyes, as though just roused from some dream.

She had been one of the first to prostrate herself at the new-made King's feet when the coronation ceremony was over; and the tears streaming down her face had been eloquent testimony of her deep emotion. But she had only breathed a few broken words of devotion and of joy, and had added something in a choked whisper which none but he had been able to hear.

"The King calls for the Maid! The King desires speech with the Maid!" such was the word ringing through the hall; and she came quietly forth from her nook, the crowd parting this way and that before her, till she was walking up through a living avenue to the place where the King was now seated upon a throne-like chair on the daïs at the far end of the hall.

As she came towards him the King extended his hand, as though he would meet her still rather as friend than as subject; but she kneeled down at his feet, and pressing her lips to the extended hand, she spoke in a voice full of emotion,

"Gentle King, now is the pleasure of God fulfilled towards you. Now is the will of my Lord accomplished. To Him alone be the praise and glory! It was His will that I should be sent before

"MY CHEVALIÈRE, MY GUARDIAN ANGEL, YOU HAVE DONE ALL THESE GREAT THINGS FOR ME. WHAT AM I TO DO IN RETURN FOR YOU?'"
—(*p.* 481.)

to raise the siege of Orleans, to lead you to this city of Rheims, there to receive your consecration. Now has He shown to all the world that you are the true King—that it is His will you reign over this fair realm, that this kingdom of France belongs to you and you alone. My task is now accomplished. His will in me is fulfilled. Go forward, then, noble King—strong in the power of your kingly might and right, doubting not that He will aid you still; though He will work with other instruments, with other means, for my task in this is now accomplished!"

There was a little stir and thrill throughout the hall as these words were spoken. Dismay fell upon many, wonder upon all, triumph gleamed from the eyes of a few; but others looked one at the other in consternation. What did she mean by these words?—this Heaven-sent Maid to whom we owed so much? Surely she did not think to leave us just in the hour of her supreme triumph? How could we hope to lead on the armies to fresh victories, if the soldiers were told that the Maid would no longer march with them? Who would direct us with heavenly council, or with that marvellous clearness of vision which is given only to a few in this sinful world, and to those only whose hearts are consecrated by a great devotion, and a great love? She could not mean that! She loved France with a great and generous love. She was devoted to the service of the King, in whom she had never been able or willing to see wrong. She knew her power with the army; she loved the rough soldiers who followed her unshrinkingly in the teeth of the very fiercest perils, and who would answer to her least command, when they would obey none other general. O no, she could not think of deserting France in this her hour of need! Much had been done; but much yet remained to do. If she were to quit her post, there could be no telling what might not follow. The English, cowed and bewildered now, might well pluck up heart of grace, and sweep back through the country once owning their sway, driving all foes before them as in the days of old. The victories won in these last weeks might soon be swallowed up in fresh defeat and disaster. How could we expect it to be otherwise if the presence of the Maid were withdrawn?

These and a hundred other questions and conjectures were buzzing through the great hall. Wonder and amaze was on every face. The King himself looked grave for a moment; but then his smile shone out carelessly gay and confident. He looked down at the Maid, and there was tender friendliness in his glance. He spoke nothing to her at the first as to what she had said; he merely asked of her a question.

"My Chevalière, my guardian angel, tell me this I pray. You have done all these great things for me; what am I to do in return for you?"

She raised her eyes towards him, and the light sprang into them—that beautiful fearless light which shone there when she led her soldiers into battle.

"Go forward fearlessly, noble King. Go forward in the power of your anointing; and fear nothing. That is all I ask of you. Do that, and you will give to me my heart's desire."

"We will talk of that later, Jeanne," he answered, "I have many things to speak upon that matter yet. But to-day I would ask you of something different. You have done great things for me; it is not fitting that you should refuse to receive something at my hands. This day I sit a King upon my father's throne. Ask of me some gift and grace for yourself—I your King and your friend demand it of you!"

It was spoken in a right kingly and gracious fashion, and we all held our breath to listen for the answer the Maid should give. We had known her so long and so well, and we had learned how little she desired for herself, how hard it was to get her to express any wish for her own gratification. She was gentle and gracious in her acceptance of the gifts received from friends who had furnished her from the beginning with such things as were needful for her altered life; but she had ever retained her simplicity of life and habit; and though often living in the midst of luxury and extravagance, she was never touched by those vices herself. And now she was bidden to ask a boon; and she must needs do it, or the displeasure of the King would light upon her. He had raised her to her feet by this time, and she stood before him, a slim boy-like figure in her white point-device dress, her cheeks a little flushed, her slender fingers tightly entwined, the breath coming and going through her parted lips.

"Gentle King," she answered, and her low full voice thrilled through the hall to its farthermost end in the deep hush which had fallen upon it, "there is one grace and gift that I would right gladly ask of you. Here in this city of Rheims are assembled a few of mine own people from Domrémy, my father, my uncle, and with them some others whom I have known and loved from childhood. I would ask this thing of you, noble King. Give me at your royal pleasure a deed,

duly signed and sealed by your royal hand, exempting the village of Domrémy, where I was born, from all taxes such as are levied elsewhere throughout the realm. Let me have this deed to give to those who have come to see me here, and thus when I return with them to my beloved childhood's home, I shall be witness to the joy and gladness which such a kingly boon will convey. Grant me this—only this, gentle King, and you will grant me all my heart desires!"

The King spoke aside a few words to one of those who stood about him, and this person silently bowed and quitted the hall; then he turned once more to the Maid, standing before him still with a happy and almost childlike smile playing over her lips.

"The thing shall be done, Jeanne," he said; "and it shall be done right soon. The first deed to which I set my hand as King shall be the one which shall for ever exempt Domrémy from all taxation. You shall give it to your father this very day, to take home with him when he goes. But as for those other words of yours—what did you mean by them? How can you witness the joy of a distant village, when you will be leading forward the armies of France to fresh victories?"

He gazed searchingly into her face as she spoke; and she looked back at him with a sudden shrinking in her beautiful eyes.

"Sire," she faltered—and anything like uncertainty in that voice was something new to us—"of what victories do you speak? I have done my part. I have accomplished that which my Lord has set me to do. My task ends here. My mission has been fulfilled. I have no command from Him to go forward. I pray you let me return home to my mother and my friends."

"Nay, Jeanne, your friends are here," spoke the King gravely, "and your country is your mother. Would you neglect to hear her cry to you in the hour of her need? Her voice it was that called you forth from your obscurity; she calls you yet. Will you cease to hear and to obey?"

The trouble and perplexity deepened in the eyes of the Maid.

"My voices have not bidden me to go forward," she faltered.

"Have they bidden you to go back—to do no more for France?"

"No," she answered, throwing back her head, her eyes kindling once again with ardour; "they have not bidden me return, or I would have done it without wavering. They tell me nothing, save to be of a good heart and courage. They promise to be with me—my saints, whom I love. But they give me no commands. I see not the path before me, as I have seen it hitherto. That is why I say, let me go home. My work is done; I have no mission more. Shall I take upon me that which my Lord puts not upon me—whether it be honour or toil or pain?"

"Yes, Jeanne, you shall take that upon you which your country calls upon you to take, which your King puts upon you, which even your saints demand of you, though perchance with no such insistence as before, since that is no longer needed. Can you think that the mind of the Lord has changed towards me and towards France? Yet you must know as well as I and my Generals do, that without you to lead them against the foe, the soldiers will waver and tremble, and perchance turn their backs upon our enemies once more. You they will follow to a man; but will they follow others when they know that you have deserted them? You tell me to go forward and be of good courage. How can I do this if you turn back, and take with you the hearts of my men?"

"Sire, I know not that such would be the case," spoke the Maid gravely. "You stand amongst them now as their crowned and anointed King. What need have they of other leader? They have followed me heretofore, waiting for you; but now——"

"Now they will want you more than ever, since you have ever led them to victory!" cried the King; and raising his voice and looking about him, especially to those generals and officers of his staff who had seen so much of the recent events of the campaign, he cried out, "What say you gentlemen? What is our chance to drive away the English and become masters of this realm if the MAID OF ORLEANS takes herself away from us, and the soldiers no longer see her standard floating before them, or hear her voice cheering them to the battle?"

Some of those present looked sullenly on the ground, unwilling to own that the Maid was a power greater than any other which could be brought into the field; but there were numbers of other and greater men, who had never denied her her meed of praise, though they had thwarted her at times in the council room; and these with one accord declared that should the Maid betake herself back to Domrémy, leaving the army to its fate they would not answer for the effect which this desertion would have, but would in fact almost expect the melting away of the great body of the trained soldiers and recruits who had fought with her, and had come to regard her presence with them as the essential to a perfect victory.

But we were destined to have a greater testimony than this, for a whisper of what was passing within the great hall had now filtered forth into the streets, and all in a moment we were aware of a mighty tumult and hubbub without, a clamour of voices louder and more insistent than those which had hailed the King a short time before, and the words which seemed to form themselves out of the clamour and gradually grow into the burden of the people's cry was the repeated and vehement shout, "THE MAID OF ORLEANS! THE MAID OF ORLEANS! We will fight if the Maid goes with us—without her we be all dead men!"

They came and told us what the crowd of soldiers in the street was shouting; they begged that the Maid would show herself at some window, and promise that she would remain with the army. Indeed there was almost a danger of riot and disaster if something were not done to quell the excitement of the soldiery and the populace; and at this news the Maid suddenly drew her slender, drooping figure to its full height, and looked long and steadfastly at the King.

"Sire," she said, "I give myself to you and to France. My Lord knows that I seek in this to do His will, though differently from heretofore. You will be disappointed. Many will misjudge me. There will be sorrow and anguish of heart as well as triumph and joy. But if my country calls, I go forth gladly to meet her cry—even though I go to my death!"

I do not know how many heard her last words; for they were drowned in the roar of joyful applause which followed her declaration. The King gave her his hand, and led her forth upon a balcony, where the great concourse in the street below could see them; and by signs he made them understand that she would continue with him as one of his Commanders-in-Chief; and in hearing this the city well-nigh went mad with joy; bonfires blazed and bells pealed madly; and the cry in the streets was less "Long live the King!" than that other frantic shout, "THE MAID OF ORLEANS! THE MAID OF ORLEANS!"

But the Maid returned to her apartments with a strange look upon her face; and she held out her hand to me as one who would fain ask help and sympathy of a trusted friend, as I am proud to think I was regarded at that time by her.

"The King's word has prevailed, O my friend," she said, "but I would that I were sure it will be for the best!"

"How can it be otherwise than for the best?" I answered as I held her hand in mine, and looked searchingly into her fair grave face. "Will not your Lord help you yet? Do not all men trust in you? Will not the soldiers fight for and with you? And are you not sure in your heart that the cause of the French King will yet triumph?"

"THE MAID LOOKED INTO MY FACE WITH HER TENDER, FAR-SEEING SMILE."—(*p.* 484.)

Her eyes were misty with unshed tears as she made reply:

"I know that my Lord will not desert me; and I trust I may serve Him yet, and the King whom I love. I know that all will be well—at the last—for this fair realm of France. But I have no commission direct from my Lord as I have had

hitherto. My voices yet speak gentle and kindly words. I trow that my saints will still watch over me, and that they will give me strength to strive and to overcome. For myself I fear not. I am ready to die for my King and my country if that be the will of God. Only the shadow lies athwart my path, where until to-day all was brightness and sunshine. It would have been so sweet to go home to my mother, to see the Fairy Tree, and the old familiar faces, and listen once more to the Angelus bell! I had thought that I should by this have earned my rest. I had not thought that with so many to serve him, the King would have had further use for me."

"Yet how could it be otherwise, my General, when the soldiers will follow you alone?—when all look to you as their champion and their friend?"

"Nay, but I have enemies too," she answered sadly, "and I know that they will work me ill—greater ill in the future than they have had power to do heretofore, when I was watched over and guarded for the task that was set me. That task is now accomplished. Can I look to receive the same protection as before? The Lord may have other instruments prepared to carry on His work of deliverance. I doubt not that He will use me yet, and that I shall never be forsaken; but my time will not be long. I shall only last a year. Let the King use me for all that I am worth!—after that he must look for others to aid him!"

I could not bear to hear her speak so. I would have broken in with protestations and denials; but something in the look upon her face silenced me. My heart sank strangely within me, for had I not learned to know how truly the Maid did read that which the future hid from our eyes. I could only seek to believe that in this she might be mistaken, since she herself did say how that things were something different with her now.

She seemed to read the thoughts that crowded my brain; for she looked into my face with her tender, far-seeing smile.

"You are sad, my kind friend, my faithful knight, and sometimes mine own heart is sad also. But yet why should we fear? I know that I have enemies, and I know that they will have more power to hurt me in the times that are coming, than has been permitted hitherto."

With an uncontrollable impulse I flung myself at her feet.

"O my General—O my dear lady—speak not such things—it breaks my heart. Or if, indeed, the peril be so great, then let all else go, and bid your father to take you back to Domrémy with him. There, at least, you will be safe and happy!"

Her eyes were deep with the intensity of her emotion.

"It may not be," she said with grave gentleness and decision, "I had hoped it for myself, but it may not be. My word is pledged. My King has commanded. I, too, must learn, in my measure, the lesson of obedience, even unto death!"

Her hands were clasped; her eyes were lifted heavenwards. A shaft of light from the sinking sun struck in through the coloured window behind her, and fell across her face with an indescribable glory. I was still upon my knees and I could not rise, for it seemed to me as though at that moment another Presence than that of the Maid was with us in the room. My limbs shook. My heart seemed to melt within me; and yet it was not fear which possessed me, but a mysterious rapture the like of which I can in no wise fathom. How long it lasted I know not. The light had faded when I rose to my feet and met her wonderful gaze. She spoke just a few words.

"Now you know what help is given us in our hours of need. My faithful knight need never mourn or weep for me; for that help and comfort will never be withheld. Of this I have the promise clear and steadfast!"

I was with her when she went to see her father. It was dark, and the old man sat with his brother-in-law, Durand Laxart—he who had helped her to her first interview with De Baudricourt—in one of the best rooms of the inn. Since it had been known that these men were the kinsfolk of the Maid, everything of the best had been put at their disposal by the desire of the citizens, and horses had been provided for them for their return to Domrémy. For the city of Rheims was mad with joy at that which had been accomplished, and the Maid was the hero of the hour.

But I could see that there was a cloud upon the old man's face—the father's; and he did not rise as his daughter entered—she before whom nobles had learnt to bend, and who sat at the Council of the King. His sombre eyes dwelt upon her with a strange expression in their depths. His rugged face was hard; his knotted hands were closely locked together.

The Maid gazed at him for a moment, a world of tender emotions in her eyes; and then she quickly crossed the room and threw herself at his feet.

"My father! My father! My father!"

The cry seemed to come from her heart, and I

saw the old man's face quiver and twitch; but he did not touch or embrace her.

"It is the dress he cannot bear," whispered Laxart distressfully to me, "it is as gall and wormwood to him to see his daughter go about in the garb of a man."

The Maid's face was raised in tender entreaty; she had hold of her father's hands by now. She was covering them with kisses.

"O my father, have you no word for me? Have you not yet forgiven your little Jeanne? I have but obeyed our Blessed Lord and His holy Saints. And see how they have helped and blessed and guided me! O my father, can you doubt that I was sent of them for this work? How then could I refuse to do it?"

Then the stern face seemed to melt with a repressed tenderness, and the father bent and touched the girl's brow with his lips. She uttered a little cry of joy, and would have flung herself into his arms; but he held her a little off, his hands upon her shoulders, and he looked into her face searchingly.

"That may have been well done, my daughter; I will not say, I will not judge. But your task is now accomplished—your own lips have said it; and yet you still are to march with the King's army, I am told. You love better the clash of arms, the glory of victory, the companionship of soldiers and courtiers to the simple duties which await you at home, and the protection of your mother's love. That is not well. That is what no modest maiden should choose. I had hoped and believed that I should take my daughter home with me. But she has chosen otherwise. Do I not well to be angry?"

The Maid's face was buried in her hands. She would have buried it in her father's breast, but he would not have it so. I could have wept tears myself at the sight of her sorrow. I saw how utterly impossible it would be to make this sturdy peasant understand the difficulty of the Maid's position, and the claims upon her great abilities, her mysterious influence upon the soldiers. The worthy *prud'homme* would look upon this as rather a dishonour and disgrace than a gift from Heaven. The words I longed to speak died away upon my tongue. I felt that to speak them would be a waste of breath. Moreover, I was here as a spectator, not as a partaker in this scene. I held the document, signed and sealed by the King, which I was prepared to read to the visitors from Domrémy. That was to be my share in this interview—not to interpose betwixt father and child.

For a few moments there was deep silence in the room; then the Maid took her hands from her face, and she was calm and tranquil once again. She possessed herself of one of her father's reluctant hands.

"My father, I know that this thing is hard for you to understand. It may be that my brothers could explain it better than I, had you patience to hear them. But this I say that I long with an unspeakable desire to return home with you, for I know that the path I must tread will darken about me, and that the end will be sad and bitter. And yet I may not choose for myself. My King commands. My country calls. I must needs listen to those voices. Oh, forgive me that I may not follow yours, nor the yearnings of mine own heart!"

The old man dropped her hand and turned away. He spoke no word; I think perchance his heart was touched by the tone of the Maid's voice, by the appealing look in her beautiful eyes. But he would not betray any sign of weakness. He turned away and leant his brow upon the hand with which he had grasped the high-carved ledge of the panelled shelf beside him. The Maid glanced at him, her lips quivering; and she spoke again in a brighter tone.

"And yet, my father, though you may not take me back with you, you shall not go away empty handed. I have that to send back with you which shall, I trust, rejoice the hearts of all Domrémy; and if you find it hard to forgive that which your child has been called upon to do, yet methinks there will be others to bless her name and pray for her, when they learn that which she has been able to accomplish."

Then she made a little sign to me, and I stepped forward with the parchment, signed and sealed, and held it towards the Maid's father. He turned to look at me, and his eyes widened in wonder and some uneasiness; for the sight of so great a deed filled him and his kinsman with a vague alarm.

"What is it?" he asked, turning full round, and I made answer:

"A deed signed by the King, exempting Domrémy from all taxation, henceforward and for ever, by right of the great and notable services rendered to the realm by one born and brought up there—Jeanne d'Arc, now better know as THE MAID OF ORLEANS."

The two men exchanged wondering glances, and over Laxart's face there dawned a smile, and intense joy and wonder.

"Nay, but this is a wonderful thing—a miracle—the like of which was never heard or known before! I pray you, noble knight, let me call

hither those of our kinsfolk and acquaintance from Domrémy as have accompanied us hither, that they may hear and understand this marvellous grace which hath been done us!"

I was glad enough that all should come and hear that which I read to them from the great document, explaining every phrase that was hard of comprehension. It was good to see how all faces glowed and kindled, and how the people crowded about the Maid with words of gratitude and blessing. Only the father stood a little apart, sorrowful and stern. And yet I am sure that his heart, though grieved, was not altogether hardened against his child; for when at the last, with tears in her eyes (all other farewells being said), she knelt at his feet begging his blessing and forgiveness, he laid his hand upon her head for a moment, and let her embrace his knees with her arms.

"Go your way, my girl, if needs must be. Your mother will ever pray for you, and I trust the Lord whom you serve will not leave you, though His ways are too hard of understanding for me."

That was all she could win from him; but her heart was comforted, I think; for as she reached her lodging and turned at the door of her room to thank me in the gracious way she never forgot, for such poor services as I had rendered, she said in a soft and happy voice:

"I think that in his heart my father hath forgiven me!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW I LAST SAW THE MAID.

I HAD thought, when I started, to tell the whole tale of the Angelic Maid and all the things which she accomplished, and all that we who companied with her did and saw, both of success and of failure. But now my heart and my pen alike refuse the task. I must needs shorten it. I think my heart would well-nigh break a second time, if I were to seek to tell all that terrible tale which the world knows so well by now.

Ah me! Ah me!—what a world is this wherein we live, in which such things can be! I wake sometimes even yet in the night, a cold sweat upon my limbs, my heart beating to suffocation, a terror as of great darkness enfolding my spirit.

And is it wonderful that it should be so? Can any man pass through such experiences as mine, and not receive a wound which time can never wholly heal? And though great things have of late been done, and the Pope and his Court have swept away all such stain and taint as men sought to fasten upon the pure nature of the wonderful and miraculous Maid, we who lived through those awful days, and heard and saw the things which happened at that time, can never forget them, and (God pardon me if I sin in this) never forgive. There are men, some living still, and some passed to their last account, whom I would doom to the nethermost hell for their deeds in the days of which I must now write—though my words will be so few. And (with horror and shame be it spoken) many of these men were consecrated servants of the Holy Church, whose very office made the evil of their deeds to stand out in blacker hues. It is easy for us to seek to fasten the blame of all upon the English, who in the end accomplished the hideous task; but at least the English were the foes against whom she had fought, and they had the right to hold her as an adversary whose death was necessary for their success; and had the English had their way she would have met her end quickly, and without all that long-drawn-out agony and mockery of a trial, every step and process of which was an outrage upon the laws of God and of man.

No, it was Frenchmen who doomed her to this—Frenchmen and priests. The University of Paris, the officers of the Inquisition, the Bishops of the realm. These it was who formed that hideous Court, whose judgments have now been set aside with contumely and loathing. These it was who after endless formalities, against which even some of themselves were forced in honour to protest, played so base and infamous a part—culminating in that so-called "Abjuration," as false as those who plotted for it—capped by their own infamous trick to render even that "Abjuration" null and void, that she might be given up into the hands of those who were thirsting for her life! Oh, how can I write of it? How can I think of it? There be times yet when Bertrand, and Guy de Laval, and I, talking together of those days, feel our hearts swell, and the blood course wildly in our veins, and truly I do marvel sometimes how it was that we and others were held back from committing some desperate crime to revenge those horrid deeds wrought by men who in blasphemous mockery called themselves the servants and consecrated priests of God.

But hold! I must not let my pen run away too fast with me. I am leaping to the end, before the end has come. But, as I say, I have no heart to write of all those weary months of wearing inactivity, wherein the spirit of the Maid chafed like that of a caged eagle, whilst the counsellors of the King—her bitter foes—had his ear, and

held him back from following the course which her spirit and her knowledge alike advocated.

And yet we made none so bad a start.

"We must march upon Paris next," spoke the Maid at the first Council of War held in Rheims after the coronation of the King, and La Hire and the soldiers applauded the bold resolve, whilst La Tremouille and other timid and treacherous spirits sought ever to hold him back.

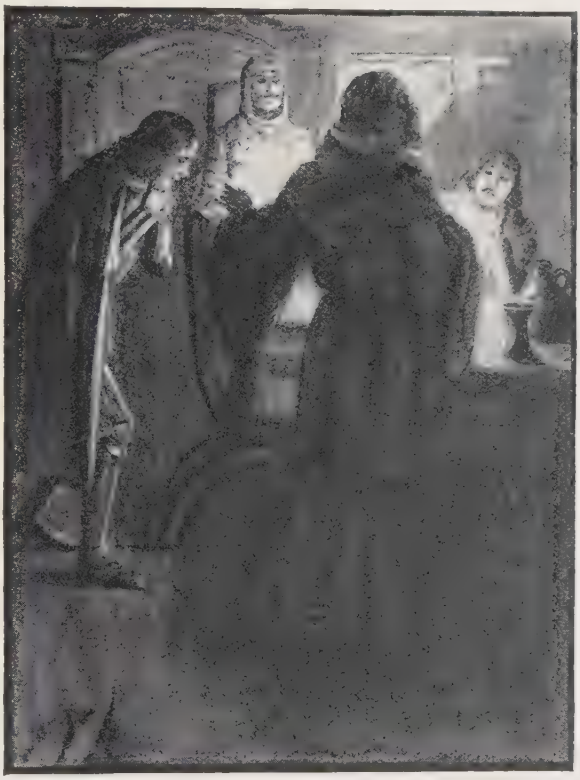
I often thought of the words spoken by the Maid to those friends of hers from Domrémy, when she bid them farewell on the evening of which I have just written.

"Are you not afraid, Jeanne," they asked, "of going into battle, of living so strange a life, of being the companion of the great men of the earth?"

And she, looking at them with those big grave eyes of hers, had made answer thus:

"I fear nothing but treachery."

I wondered when she spoke what treachery she was to meet with; but soon it became all too apparent. The King's ministers were treacherously negotiating with false Burgundy, some say with the Regent Bedford himself. They cared not to save France. They cared only to keep out of harm's way—to avoid all peril and danger, and to thwart the Maid, whose patriotism and lofty courage was such a foil to their pusillanimity and cowardice.



"THE OLD MAN DROPPED THE MAID'S HAND AND TURNED AWAY."—(*p.* 485.)

So that though she led us to the very walls of Paris, and would have taken the whole city without a doubt, had she been permitted, though the Duc d'Alençon, now her devoted adherent, went down upon his very knees to beg of the King to fear nothing, but trust all to her genius, her judgment; he could not prevail, and orders were sent forth to break down the bridge that she had built for the storming party to pass over, and that the army should fall back with their task undone!

Oh, the folly, the ingratitude, the baseness of it all! How well do I remember the face of the Maid, as she said:

"The King's word must be obeyed; but truly it will take him seven years—ay, and twenty years now, to accomplish that which I would do for him in less than twenty days!"

Think of it—you who have seen what followed. Was Paris in the King's hands in less than seven years? Were the English driven from France in less than twenty?

She was wounded too; and had been forcibly carried away from the field of battle; but it was against her own will. She would have fought through thick and thin, had the King's commands not prevailed; and even then she begged to be left with a band of soldiers at St. Denis.

"My voices tell me to remain here," she said; but alas! her voices were regarded no longer by the King, whose foolish head and cowardly heart were under other influences than that of the Maid, to whom he had promised so much such a short while since.

And so his word prevailed, and we were perforce obliged to retreat from those walls we had so confidently desired to storm, and here in the church of St. Denis, where she had knelt so many hours in prayer and supplication, the Maid left her beautiful silver armour, which had so often flashed its radiant message of triumph to her soldiers, and with it that broken sword—broken outside the walls of Paris, and which no skill had

sufficed to mend—which had been taken from St. Catherine's Church in Fierbois. It was not altogether an unwonted act for knights to deposit their arms in churches, though the custom is dying away, with so many other relics of chivalry; but there was something very strange and solemn in this act of the Maid. It was to us a significant sign of that which she saw before her. We dared not ask her wherefore she did it. Something in her sad, gentle face forbade us. But I felt the tears rising to my eyes as I watched her kneel long in prayer when the deed was done, and I heard stifled sobs arising from that end of the building where some women and children knelt. For the Maid was ever the friend of all such, and never a woman or child whom she approached, whether she were clad in peasant's homespun or in shining coat of mail, but gave her love and trust and friendship at sight.

Henceforth the Maid went clothed in a light suit of mail, such as any youthful knight might wear. She never spoke again of her fair white armour, or of the sword which had shivered in her hand, none save herself knew how or when.

Alas! for the days of glory which had gone before! Why did we keep her with the King's armies, when the monarch's ear was engrossed by adverse counsel, and his heart turned away from her who had been his Deliverer in the hour of his greatest need?

Methinks she would even now have returned home, but for the devotion of the soldiers and the persuasions of the Duc d'Alençon, and of some of the other generals, amongst whom the foremost were Dunois and La Hire. These chafed equally with the Maid at the supine attitude of the King, and the Duke, his kinsman, spoke out boldly and fearlessly, warning him of the peril he was doing to his kingdom, and the wrong to the Maid who had served him so faithfully and well, and to whom he had made such fair promises.

But for the present all such entreaties or warnings fell upon deaf ears. The time for the King's awakening had not yet come.

Nevertheless, we had our days of glory still, under the banner of the Maid, when, after many months of idleness, the spring-tide again awoke the world, and she sallied forth strong in the assurance of victory, and fortress after fortress fell before her, as in the days of yore. Oh, how joyous were our hearts! Now did we believe truly that the tide had turned, and that we were marching on to victory. But upon the Maid's face a shadow often might be seen to rest; and once or twice when I would ask her of it, she replied in a low, sorrowful voice:

"My year is well-nigh ended. Something looms before me. My voices have told me to be ready for what is coming. I fear me it will be my fate to fall into the hands of the foe!"

I would not believe it! Almost I was resolved to plunge mine own dagger into her heart sooner than she should fall into the hand of the pitiless English. But woe is me! I was not at her side that dreadful evening at Compiègne, when this terrible mishap befell. I had been stricken down in that horrid death-trap, when, hemmed in between the ranks of the Burgundians and English, we found our retreat into the city cut off. Was it treachery? Was it incapacity upon the part of the leaders of the garrison, or what was the reason that no rush from the city behind took the English in the rear, and effected the rescue of the Maid?

I know not—I have never known—all to me is black mystery. I was one of those to see the peril first, and with Bertrand and Guy de Laval beside me, to charge furiously upon the advancing foe, crying aloud to others to close round the Maid and bear her away into safety, whilst we engaged the enemy and gave them time.

That is all I know. All the rest vanishes in the mists. When these mists cleared away, Bertrand and I were in the home of Sir Guy, tended by his mother and grandmother—both of whom had seen and loved well the wonderful Maid—and she was in a terrible prison, some said an iron cage, guarded by brutal English soldiers, and declared a witch or a sorceress, not fit to live, nor to die a soldier's death, but only to perish at the stake as an outcast from God and man.

Months had passed since the battle of Compiègne. Fever had had me fast in its grip all that while, and the news I heard on recovery brought it all back again. Bertrand and Guy were in little better case. We were like pale ghosts of our former selves during those winter months, when, hemmed in by snow, we could learn so little news from without, and could only eat out our hearts in rage and grief.

With the spring came the news of the trial at Rouen—the bitter hatred of Bishop Cauchon—the awful consummation he had vowed to bring about.

I know not whether it were folly to hope such a thing, but we three knights made instantly for the coast and crossed to England, to seek the ear of the young King there, and plead the cause of the Maid before him. I need not say how our mission failed. I care not to recall those sickening days of anxiety and hope deferred, and utter defeat at the last.

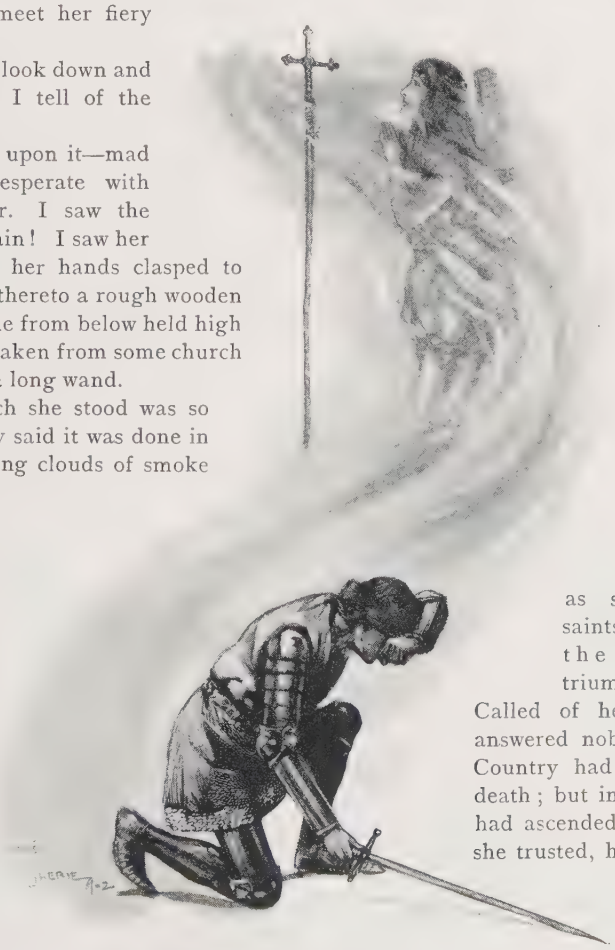
Heartbroken and desperate we returned; and made our way to Rouen. The whole city was in confusion. Need I say more? That very day, within an hour, the Maid, the Messenger from God, the Deliverer of the King, the Saviour of France, was to die by fire, to perish as a heretic. And the King whom she had saved had not lifted a hand to save her; the country she had delivered from a crushing disgrace, stood idly by to watch her perish thus!

Oh, the shame!—the disgrace!—the horror! Let me not try to write of it. The King has striven now to make amends; but I wonder how he feels sometimes when he sees the May sunshine streaming over the fair earth—over that realm which he now rules from sea to sea, when he thinks of the Maid who was led forth in that blaze of glory to meet her fiery doom.

O God of Heaven look down and judge! How shall I tell of the sight I beheld?

Suddenly I came upon it—mad with my grief, desperate with horror and despair. I saw the face of the Maid again! I saw her upraised eyes, and her hands clasped to her breast, holding thereto a rough wooden cross, whilst someone from below held high in the air a crucifix taken from some church and fastened upon a long wand.

The pile on which she stood was so high—so high; they said it was done in mercy, that the rising clouds of smoke might choke her ere the flame touched her. She was clad in a long white garment from head to foot; her hair had grown and fell about and back from her face in a soft cloud gilded by the sun's rays. Her face was rapt—smiling—yes, I will swear it—smiling, as a child smiles up into the face of its father.



There was an awful hush throughout the wide place. Everything reeled and swam before me; but I saw that face—that serene and smiling face, wan and pale, but tranquil and glad and triumphant.

Then came the rush of smoke, and the glare of ruddy fire. A stifled cry, like one immense groan rose from below—above in the reek and blaze all was silent. But from out that fire I saw—yes, and another saw it too (an English soldier, rushing to add a faggot to the pyre, a token of his hate to the Maid), and it so wrought upon him that he dropped his burden, fell upon his knees and was like to die of the fear—I saw a white dove rise from the smoke wreaths of that ghastly pile, hover a moment, just touched by the glare of the fire, and then dart heavenwards as upon eagle's wings. Yes, I saw it. To the day of my death will I swear it. I saw what she had seen in vision long ago; and upon my heart there fell a strange sense of peace and calm. It had not hurt her—it had been as she once said. Her saints had been with her to the end. She had triumphed. All was well. Called of her Country, she had answered nobly to the call. Her Country had awarded her a fiery death; but in that fiery chariot she had ascended to the Lord in whom she trusted, hereafter to receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away.

THE END.

THE BATTLE OF THE TULIPS

"I THINK I could be happy,"
Said Lily Ethel White,
"With regiments of soldiers
Who'd glory in a fight;

For Bobby Jones has got them,
He fights them every day,
But girls, he says, are stupid;
He never lets me stay.

And my canary's sleepy,
I'm tired of all my toys,
I couldn't kill the kitten
Without a dreadful noise;

I think I'll fight the tulips
All standing there in rows,
Like regiments of soldiers
Who haven't any toes;

Their uniforms are golden,
And red, and purple brown;
They never even whisper—
I think I'll shoot them down.

They're not at all like kittens,
And not a bit like toys;
When you want to have a battle,
Tulips never make a noise."

She fought that dreadful battle,
And all the lawn was laid
With proud and splendid tulips
Who ne'er a murmur made;

But flopped from off their perches
At every cutting blow,
And fell like valiant soldiers;
They made a glorious show.

Then naughty Lily Ethel
Went off to have some tea,
"But afterwards I'll bury you,
My mother mustn't see:"

For though in all that battle,
And through that dreadful fight
She'd been a valiant conqueror,
—Afraid was Lily White.

She came at last to find them,
Her heart was in her toes:
Alas! alas! the tulips
Were curdled up in rows:
All dead, these glorious soldiers,
And dead without a sound:
Poor Lily White was penitent
As there she looked around.

"Oh dear! Oh dear!" she faltered,
"Are tulips really real?
Although they never whisper,
I do believe they feel."

When later still, her mother
Saw tulips on the ground,
Instead of on their glorious stems,
There Lily Ethel found—

'Tis best to fight a kitten,
Or damage all one's toys,
Than slaughter those in battle,
Who never make a noise.

CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

GIRLS THAT THE COUNTIES ARE PROUD OF

II.—ESSEX.

BY JOHN OCKELFORD THOMPSON.

Photo. Grove, Brompton Road.

THE COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

Who has spent a great part of her life at her seat at Dunmow in Essex.

VARIOUS writers have dwelt upon the fertility and the picturesqueness of the county of Essex. Poets have sung of its forests and rivers, and artists, like Constable, have flocked into it for scenery typical of rural England. Yet with all this, the very wrong idea prevails that the county is flat—flat as a pancake. Impressions grounded as this has become are very difficult to eradicate. Essex is not a flat and uninteresting, but a very charming county, full of interest for people of every turn of mind, and of a quiet, home-like beauty that takes the stranger by surprise. It is as true to-day as it was in 1580, when in his "Poly-Olbion," Drayton wrote that:

"Essex is our dower, which greatly doth abound
With every simple good that in the isle is found."

And what shall be said of the people of Essex? They are warm-hearted, generous souls, and, for the most part, very conservative. You may search the country through without finding a people who are more proud of their own county than Essex people are, hard hit as agriculture has been of late years. The people are proud, too, of the race that has gone before them. Was not the mother of Constantine the Great an Essex woman? She is said by our ancient English historians to have been born at Camalodunum, so Colchester and Maldon dispute the right to call her theirs.

While this dispute still wages, and is the subject of good-humoured banter between representatives of the two towns in after-dinner speeches, it is certain that Barking, Essex, was the first convent for women in this kingdom. It was founded in 672 by St. Erkenwald, Bishop of London, second son of Anna, King of East Anglia, and his sister, St. Ethelburga, was the first Abbess. Elfrida, widow of Edgar; Maud, Queen of Henry I.; Maud, Queen of Stephen, and Mary, sister of Thomas à Becket, presided over this convent. Bow Bridge was built by Maud, Queen of Henry I., and is said to be the first arched stone bridge in the county, whence, according to some, it derived its name; but Grose conjectures that it derived its name from *beau* (beautiful).

Some towns in Essex claim to be noted for their beautiful women to-day, and doggerel has it that at least one has more than its proportion of ugly women, while the singular name of one village, called Ugley, has given rise to the ditty:

"Ugley church and Ugley steeple,
Ugley parson, Ugley people."

Diving into the past a good many names might be found in the Essex biography of both men and women who have had a hand in the making of English history, and in the advancement of the arts and sciences. Our main business here, however, is with the present, and certainly, for grace and beauty, for attainment, and for hard and useful work for the benefit of her fellow-creatures, there is no lady whose name stands out in Essex or in England more prominently than that of Frances Evelyn, Countess of Warwick, who owns 23,000 acres of Essex land.

It is difficult to say what good office the Countess of Warwick does not hold. Wherever woman's work is useful there her ladyship is found, and in many things she has led, and is leading, the way. As Frances Evelyn, the eldest daughter of the late Colonel the Hon. Charles Henry Maynard, son of the last Viscount Maynard, she married, on the 30th of April, 1881, the

Photo. H. S. Mendelssohn.

MISS ELLA DU CANE.

An Essex girl whose water-colour studies of beautiful gardens are famous. She received several commissions from Queen Victoria, and one from their present Majesties.

present Earl of Warwick. She was then (as now) very beautiful, and the heiress of the Maynard estates in Essex and elsewhere. It is in Essex that her ladyship has spent most of her life, although since the death of the late Earl of Warwick, whom her husband, then Lord Brooke, succeeded in 1893, her chief residence has been at Warwick Castle. The girlhood of the Countess of Warwick was quiet and uneventful. It was not until some years after her ladyship's marriage that she realised that real happiness lay in work, and in systematic work. As a girl she was shy and dreamy and reserved. Her one great leaning was to an outdoor life—riding chiefly—and the love of nature, an almost passionate love that has never left her. Flowers, birds, animals, she has always loved, and she was ever a keen observer of nature. Then the traditions of a name honoured in Essex—the name of Maynard—bequeathed to her by her grandparents, gave her a vague, dim desire to leave behind her, as they had done, a record of unselfish deeds. Thus it was that her ladyship's whole life developed and became concrete after marriage, not before. That is why she is so keenly interested in the development of her own only daughter.

The Countess, of course, is well known as a leader of Society, and the name of public movements with which she is identified is legion. Many of them she has herself initiated, notably the Essex Needlework Guild, which does a wonderful work for the poor of the county in the way of providing them with warm garments for the winter; the Lady Warwick School at Bigods Hall, Dunmow, where excellent work in scientific and technical instruction is being carried on; the Hostel at Reading, in connection with the college for training the daughters of professional men in horticulture, dairy, bee, and poultry keeping, etc.; the home, at Warwick, for crippled children, admitted free for an unlimited length of stay; the Dunmow Nursing Association, and similar institutions for the welfare of the poor and the nursing of the sick, and many other things. Her ladyship has also acted as a Poor Law Guardian, and she is the present Mayoress of Warwick.

MISS K. M. COURTAULD.

Of Earl's Colne, Essex. Miss Courtauld has made her name as a prosperous woman farmer.

Her ladyship is an expert horsewoman. She can ride and drive as well as any of her sex, and better than most men. In the hunting field she is still to the front, and to see how grandly she can tool her coach and four is a sight well worth witnessing. Moreover, it was Lady Warwick who, in 1896, created a record in the annals of coaching by driving from her seat at Easton Lodge to Land's End. The Countess is also fond of gardening among other out-door hobbies, and of this she has published a very interesting account. At Easton Lodge she takes great pride in what she calls her Shakespeare garden, where she carefully produces and tends every flower and plant named in Shakespeare's works. Indoors it is well known that her ladyship is a great reader. She reads every important new book, and writes a good deal, while as for a speech, she is eloquent on all occasions, speaking extempore. She excels in everything she takes up—she is beautiful, clever, kindly, sympathetic, courageous, benevolent, generous.

An Essex lady who has caused, and is causing, a considerable sensation in the world of artists, is Miss Ella Du Cane, of Mountains, Witham, the daughter of the late Sir Charles Du Cane and of Lady Du Cane, a daughter of the late Lady Lyndhurst, widow of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. Miss Du Cane's water-colour studies of gardens attracted much attention at the Graves' Galleries.

On her mother's side Miss Du Cane is directly descended from John Singleton Copley, R.A., the painter of battle pictures. She manifested a natural liking for art, and she was always fond of the garden. Indeed, she knows a good deal of the practical side of gardening, and she and her sisters have made the grounds of Mountains famous for their order and beauty. Her natural love for water-colour sketching was encouraged by lessons from Sir James Linton, and to-day her pictures command admiration and high prices everywhere. Miss Du Cane never works in a studio, but always out of doors, on the spot. Her own home and county have afforded her many charming pictures. Out of England Madeira is one of her favourite sketching grounds. She had the honour of several commissions from the late Queen Victoria, both at Windsor and Osborne, and in other ways her late Majesty acquired drawings by this clever young artist, one of them being by way of a birthday present from the Duke of York, now Prince of Wales. Their present Majesties the King and Queen have also both been purchasers and warm admirers of the works of Miss Du Cane, whose facility and energy seem almost boundless, for it is recorded that for one exhibition at the Graves' Galleries she executed no less than seventy-five pictures in the preceding twelve months, besides many others. Her method, vigour, and skill are alike remarkable, and all who have a knowledge of painting flowers and gardens will recognise that it is nothing less than wonderful to find such faithful representations as Miss Du Cane's, with all the profuseness of bloom and colour truthfully, daintily, and harmoniously depicted. It would be invidious and difficult to mention her best pictures, but the most striking include one of a corner in the garden at Mountains, "Delphiniums and Crimson Rambler," where flowers are growing luxuriantly round an old sun-dial in the middle of a beautiful lawn (the property of the late Queen Victoria), "A Cottage Garden in Essex," "The Fair Garden, Braxted Park," "The Blackwater, Essex," "Rose Pergola at Warley Place," etc., etc. Wherever she is, Miss Du Cane finds freshness and inspiration, and she always shows a real sense of beauty and power of selection.

From the art of painting to the art of music is not a very far cry, and in Essex are to be found two young ladies, sisters, who have made for themselves enviable reputations in the musical world. These are the Misses Gertrude and Edith Byford, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Byford, of Avenue Lodge, Chelmsford. The one is a brilliant pianist and violoncellist, the other a very skilful executant on the violin. The Misses Byford attained their position not by unceasing study only, but by real musical ability, inherited from their father. The two sisters were born in Chelmsford, and they received the whole of their early musical training at home. Asked, for the purpose of this article, what first gave them their love of music, they replied that as they could never remember the time when they thought of much else, it was very difficult to say. It is recorded, however, that as quite tiny children they used to sing through whole overtures (which they had heard their father's pupils playing), accompanying themselves on imaginary violins consisting of rulers and long pens! Miss Edith Byford had a small violin given to her on her sixth birthday, and although they were, of course, not expected to work at all seriously for a long time, Mr. Byford used to give them both occasional lessons on the violin and piano respectively, which they would look forward to as special treats.

The first time that the sisters played together in public was at Chelmsford, when they played a Bach Gavotte for violin and piano. They were

MISS GERTRUDE BYFORD.

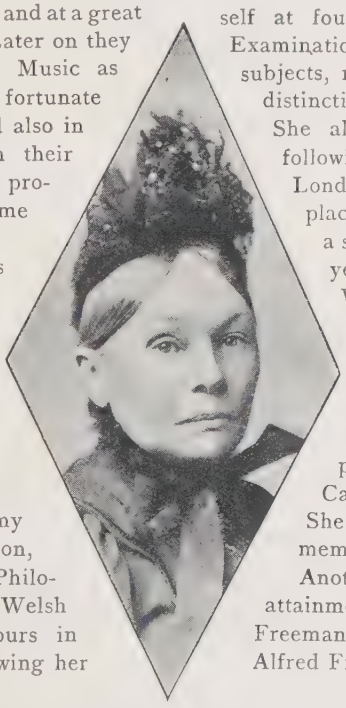
An Essex girl, and a former Royal Academy student, well known in musical circles as a pianist and 'cellist.

MISS EDITH BYFORD.

Born at Chelmsford. Like her sister Gertrude, she adopted music as her career, and is now a violinist of the first order.

never made to practise for any fixed number of hours a day, although their other studies took a second place to their music. They afterwards played in public a great deal, both at their own concerts in the Essex county town, and at a great many concerts in other towns. Later on they entered the Royal Academy of Music as students. Both girls were very fortunate at the R.A.M. examinations, and also in gaining the kindest interest in their career from many of the leading professors. Edith subsequently became a sub-professor of the Academy.

Two other Chelmsford girls have brought credit to their town and county by their diligence and success in their studies. These are the Misses Amy Maud and Norah Helen Bodkin, the second and fourth daughters, respectively, of Mr. William Bodkin, M.D., of the Cloisters. The elder Miss Bodkin, Amy Maud, has obtained her B.A. London, with second-class honours in Philosophy, also her B.A. in the Welsh University, with first-class honours in Philosophy (this in the year following her London success). She held a scholarship at Aberystwyth for five years, and last year she lectured on Philosophy and kindred subjects at the Bedford College, London. This year she is at Aberystwyth studying experimental psychology and biology.



MISS LUCY DOCWRA.

Kelvedon, in Essex, claims Miss Docwra for its own, and is justly proud of her reputation for good works.

Miss Norah Helen Bodkin distinguished herself at fourteen in the Junior Cambridge Examination by obtaining distinction in five subjects, no other girl in that year gaining distinction in more than four subjects. She also distinguished herself in the following year by matriculating at the London University, obtaining the sixth place in the Honours list. She held a scholarship at Aberystwyth for five years, and obtained her B.A. in the Welsh University, with first-class honours in mathematics. In the following year she obtained a mathematical scholarship at Newnham of a hundred guineas, and last year she took the first place in the Senior Optimes in the Cambridge Mathematical Tripos. She is a good all-round student, her memory being her strong point.

Another Essex lady of great scholastic attainments is a daughter of Mrs. Alfred Freeman, of Maldon, and the late Mr. Alfred Freeman, a highly-respected solicitor. Miss Freeman has now become Mrs. Helen M. Lewis, wife of Mr. W. H. Lewis, M.A., head of the Chemical

and Biological Departments of the Royal Albert Memorial College, Exeter. The Freeman family still reside in Essex, and the county claims Mrs. Lewis as one of its own distinguished women, though she has since settled in Devonshire. She was born in Essex, and all her girlhood was spent there. Her family is a talented one all round—her youngest sister, Miss Margaret Freeman, holds the degree of B.Sc., though Mrs. Lewis was the first Maldon girl to gain a University degree. Probably, also, she was one of the first Essex girls, for she took her degree eleven years ago. Miss Helen M. Freeman was, at the age of ten years, sent to the North London Collegiate School for Girls, under the head-mistresship of Miss Buss. There she spent eight years, gaining various scholarships tenable at the school. At the age of seventeen she matriculated in Honours at the London University. When she left school she was at the head of the Upper Sixth, and had passed the Intermediate Arts Examination of the London University. She then went to the University College of Wales. In her time things were very different there from what they now are. To-day the number of women students is very large, and they have a splendid Hall of Residence. In Miss Freeman's day the Hall of Residence was an ordinary seaside lodging-house, and they numbered only twenty or thirty students. Miss Freeman spent two years there, at the end of her course taking the degree of Bachelor of Arts in London University, with Honours in English.

MISS BEATRICE PERTWEE.

A Ch... work ... S...

By this time Miss Freeman had determined to make some practical use of the course of work she had been through, and to that end she went for a year to the Cambridge Training College for Women Teachers in Secondary Schools, and afterwards took the Diploma of London University in the Art, Theory, and History of Education. She was then asked by her old mistress, Miss Buss, if she would like to return to school as a teacher. There are few of the late Miss Buss's pupils who would not have accepted such an offer, and for about four years Miss Freeman was one of the mistresses there.

MISS ELLEN C. PASH.

... ...

Since the above was written, another Essex lady has gained the degree of B.Sc. This is Miss Ellen L. Pash, a native of Great Baddow, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. Brittain Pash. The chief reason which led her to work for the degree was the excellent science teaching given at the laboratories of the Essex County Council. She has been resident student at Westfield College, attending likewise at University College, London, and she also spent one term at University College, Bangor.

Another important branch of education—agriculture—finds a leading exponent in an Essex lady—to wit, Miss K. M. Courtauld, of Colne Engaine, Earl's Colne. Miss Courtauld, is a daughter of Mr. George Courtauld, J.P., of Cut Hedge, Gosfield. She has lived in East Essex all her life. She has now been living at her farm at Colne Engaine for over twelve years, and farming on her own account, and although she does not pretend to say that she makes much profit, she makes something, and she derives a great deal of pleasure from the occupation. Miss Courtauld has excellent health, and enjoys an out-door life in all weathers, and the routine of farm life gives her

MISS MYRA PERTWEE.

Of Chelmsford, who is now devoting herself to hospital work in South Africa, chiefly among our soldiers and the Boer refugees.

an unfailing interest. A farming life, too, offers many opportunities for sport of various kinds, in most of which Miss Courtauld takes part, and she has ridden pretty regularly to hounds for many years. She is also considered a good shot, and often accompanies her father over his preserves. Before leaving school, Miss Courtauld remembers telling her father she would like to be a farmer, but unfortunately at that time Lady Warwick's Hostel, Swanley College, and other institutions of the sort, had not been started, and it was not until some time later that this budding agriculturist had opportunities of acquiring some agricultural knowledge on her father's farms. Her father has now given over to her the management of between six and seven hundred acres, part of which she has let, keeping in her own hands not quite three hundred acres.

Miss Courtauld tries not to put all her eggs into one basket, but to make her farming as varied as possible, so that when one branch fails, another may do well. She has a pedigree flock of Suffolk sheep. She fattens a few bullocks every year, and keeps a number of pigs, and has a herd of dairy cows. She thinks the poultry and dairy produce pay well, as she sends a great many boxes of farm produce to private consumers in London, who take advantage of the special rates allowed by the Great Eastern Railway. Besides growing all the ordinary farm crops for which the land is suitable, this Essex lady farmer has about twelve acres of fruit. This pays well in some years, but both crops and prices vary largely. For instance, in 1896 she took £153 for black currants alone, and the following year only £67. Miss Courtauld sends a good deal of her fruit to the East Anglian Farmers' Co-operation at Covent Garden, of which she is a member and small shareholder, and finds she gets fairly good prices from them. For the rest, she is a member of her Parish Council and a School Manager; she is on the House Committee of the Halstead Cottage Hospital and the Greenwood Industrial School for Girls, and on the Committee of the Halstead and District Farmers' Club. At the Show of the latter, last autumn, she did very well, taking several prizes for fruit, roots, butter, and poultry. Miss Courtauld is always interested ir any movement for helping women to take up agricultural and horticultural work, and is an Associate of "Lady Warwick's Agricultural Association for Women," and a member of the Committee of "The Women's Agricultural and Horticultural International Union." Lately she has made arrangements to take a few lady pupils on her own farm.

The keynote to the life-work of Miss Lucy Docwra, of Greys, Kelvedon—a lady of whom Essex has just reason to be proud, and grateful for all her self-denying efforts in the cause of humanity—is to be found in the words:

"I believe that Rescue work appeals to the benevolent with greater force than Preventive work. But surely it is better to spend time, and energy, and money, in preventing a child from entering a dangerous and slippery path, rather than leave him unwarned, and then undertake the far more difficult and less satisfactory task of endeavouring to efface the scars of sin and wrong-doing."

Miss Docwra was born at Greys, Kelvedon, and still continues to reside in the same house, occu-

MISS HELEN BODKIN.

Of Chelmsford, who gained a Mathematical Scholarship at Newnham, and great honour in the Mathematical Tripos.

MISS MAUD BODKIN.

B.A. of London. She has secured first-class Honours in Philosophy. Chelmsford is proud of both sisters.

MRS. HELEN M. LEWIS (*née* FREEMAN).

Maldon, in Essex, was her birthplace. She was one of the first girls in Essex to gain a University degree.

pied by her family for the last 160 years. Like so many philanthropic workers, Miss Docwra is descended from an old Huguenot family, although some of her ancestors lived in England more than a century before the date of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, one of them, Sir Thomas Docwra, being Grand Prior of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in the reign of Henry VIII., and builder of the ancient gatehouse of St. John's, Clerkenwell, in the year 1508, where his name and arms may still be seen. The influence which had the greater part in the moulding of Miss Docwra's life was that of her good mother, who only died about a year since. She spent her life for the benefit of her fellow-creatures, and especially in devotion to the great work of temperance. Such a character could not fail to make an impression on the minds and thoughts of her family. Both parents were earnest members of the Society of Friends, and Miss Docwra still remains true to the principles of that most philanthropic section of the Christian Church. We find her away from the old family town, and at school in Bath, in 1859. In the month of March, 1877, Mr. A. Johns Copland, of Chelmsford, started that organisation—destined to be fruitful of so much good—known as the North Essex Band of Hope Union. He became its first secretary, but his regrettable early death leaving this responsible post vacant, it was accepted *pro tem.* by Miss Docwra, who has remained in this most useful capacity ever since.

The immense amount of organisation needed for all the work is only equalled by the mountain-load of correspondence that falls on the secretary, each one of the 169 Bands of Hope being, on an average, communicated with twenty-three times a year, besides the volumes of letters that must be written respecting the conferences and travelling libraries. Miss Docwra's talent for organisation and business was soon noted in a marked manner at the United Kingdom Band of Hope headquarters. In 1878 the North Essex Union paid her the exceptional honour of electing her a member of the General Council, and subsequently she was given a place on the Executive Committee—the first lady who had ever been chosen for either capacity. She was for five years a member of the Braintree Board of Guardians.

In another noble direction for the benefit of their fellow-creatures are two Chelmsford girls, the daughters of Mr. Charles Pertwee, F.R.I.B.A.—a pillar of Nonconformity in the Essex county town, and held everywhere in the highest regard—exercising their talents and their Christian influences. These are Mr. Pertwee's eldest and second daughters, the Misses Ellen Myra Pertwee and Mary Beatrice Pertwee. Both have been out nursing in South Africa. The elder has been in that far-distant country, doing mission nursing for nine years, and during the past two years the mission has devoted a good deal of its energy to our soldiers and the Boer refugees. Miss Mary Beatrice Pertwee has just returned from South Africa, where she acted as Army Nursing Sister for two years.

There yet remains to be mentioned a lady who, under the name of Miss Dorothy Vane, gained great distinction in the histrionic and operatic art. This young lady is the second daughter of Mr. J. G. Mackenzie, of By House, Dunmow. At an early age she was sent away to school, and was there under Herr Stepan, a celebrated musician, and subsequently she entered the Guildhall School of Music. After a long term there she joined one of the late Mr. D'Oyly Carte's operatic companies. Her *début* was at Manchester, early in 1892; in the title *rôle* of "Iolanthe" she established herself a great favourite with the critical Lancashire people. In September of the same year she came to the Savoy Theatre, London, and in "Haddon Hall" played the part of Dorcas. In the spring of the following year she had the privilege of singing before His Majesty the King, then the Prince of Wales, at Easton Lodge, and in the summer of the same year she played the title *rôle* in the comic opera, "Jane Annie." In 1896 Mr. D'Oyly Carte sent a company to South Africa, and Miss Vane played, amongst other parts, Phœbe in "The Yeomen of the Guard," Pitti Sing in "The Mikado," and Tessa in "The Gondoliers." On returning to England, in the autumn of 1897, she played to many audiences in the provinces—in fact, in almost all the large cities and towns in Great Britain. In 1898 she entered into a contract for two years with Mr. Williamson, the well-known Australian impresario, and appeared in her best-known parts in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, etc. There she further distinguished herself, and added to her *repertoire* in Australia. One of her greatest successes was scored in "La Poupée." At the expiry of her contract, in 1900, she retired from the stage, and in September of that year she married, and is now settled in Melbourne.

The first article in this series was: NOVEMBER, 1901.—**Girls that Norfolk is proud of.**
The next to appear will be: **Girls that Warwickshire is proud of.**

Ugly Dog and Sly Fox.

A STORY OF REVENGE.

Mole had a photograph gallery in the woods. One of the rooms was all dark, because it was under the ground, and here Mole spent nearly all his time making pictures come on the glass plates. He was there so much that after a while he could hardly see at all, so he had to get Ugly Dog to help him. Ugly Dog was a good barker, and he stood out in front of the photograph gallery all day, saying: "Step right up, birds and animals, and get your very fine pictures taken."

Ugly Dog made so much noise, and talked so much about the pictures, that nearly all the birds and animals ordered a dozen photographs apiece. Silly Goose, Gray Mouse and Kerchug, the leap-frog, were so pleased that each of them ordered two dozen.

Ugly Dog was out in front of the photograph gallery, barking one afternoon when he saw Sly Fox in the bushes coming toward him. He and Sly Fox were not friends, and he began to growl and snarl.

"Stop your noise," called out the Mole coming out of the dark room. "You are shaking all the pictures down."

"I can't help it," cried Ugly Dog, "Sly Fox made me stand in front of the house which was running on two rails and the front step knocked me over and nearly killed me."

"Now you do what I tell you," said Mole, "and you can pay Sly Fox out for that trick."

"UGLY DOG WAS A GOOD BARKER. HE STOOD OUT ALL DAY SAYING, 'STEP RIGHT UP, BIRDS AND ANIMALS.'"

So Mole and Ugly Dog went down into the dark room, and Mole told Ugly Dog just what to do. Ugly Dog went back and stood in front of the photograph gallery, and when Sly Fox came up he made a low bow.

"Good morning, Sly Fox. Ha! Ha!" he said. "That was such a very good joke. After the running house struck me and I found myself lying in the road, I got up and laughed, and laughed so hard that for weeks afterward I was sore all over. You are such a very funny animal, and you look just as funny as you are. Whenever I see that great, big, long, thin neck of yours I can hardly help laughing."

Sly Fox was very vain. He put his paw up to his neck and felt it all over, and then said: "You are a very foolish animal, Ugly Dog. Anybody can see that my neck is very short and very graceful."

"I don't wonder that you do not care to have your picture taken," said Ugly Dog. "Silly Goose passed by here only yesterday and ordered two dozen. I don't suppose that my partner, Mole, would care to risk his camera taking a picture of one so ugly as you, anyway. It's too bad that your tail is so short and stubby."

Now, Sly Fox was very proud of his long and bushy tail, and when he heard what Ugly Dog said, he became red in the face.

"UGLY DOG WAS OUT IN FRONT OF THE PHOTOGRAPH GALLERY ONE AFTERNOON WHEN HE SAW SLY FOX COMING TOWARDS HIM."

"SLY FOX SAT THERE TRYING TO LOOK PLEASANT."

"It's just as well," said Ugly Dog, "that you do not take a very good picture, for I hear that you have so little money now that you could not afford to do so, anyway."

Then Sly Fox shook his paw in Ugly Dog's face.

"Take my picture right away," he said, "and I'll let you know that I have money to pay for it. I shall wait here until it is done."

So Ugly Dog called down to his friend Mole, and Mole came up with his camera.

"Sit right down on this stool," said Ugly Dog.

Sly Fox sat down, and Ugly Dog put a funny kind of tongs passing to a long rod behind him. He put the ends of the tongs under Sly Fox's ears and screwed them up tight.

"That's to keep your head still," said Mole.

"Don't you think that is a little bit too tight," asked Sly Fox, squirming around, for he was held so fast that he had shooting pains in his head.

"Look pleasant, please," grunted Mole, from under the cloth which was over the camera.

"You must stay here for fifteen minutes," added Ugly Dog, very quietly.

So Sly Fox stayed sitting there with a bouquet in his right paw and trying to look pleasant, although the tongs about his ears were so tight that his eyes stuck out, and he could hardly keep his tongue from hanging down. Mole took the camera back into the dark room, and, after awhile, he came out with a photograph all finished.

"I'll put it up right in front of you, Sly Fox," said Ugly Dog, "so that you can take a good look at it."

As Sly Fox looked toward the photograph Ugly Dog slipped up behind and gave the tongs another turn and then jumped back into the bushes. When Sly Fox saw the picture he raised his paws and said, "O, my! O, my! Take it away."

It was such an awful picture that it would scare anybody to look at it. Mole had placed pictures of different animals together and had made one picture. There was a creature with a long neck like Silly Goose's, and a little stubby tail like Ugly Dog's, and a body like Big Elephant's. It had two feet which looked like the goose's, and two other feet which looked like elephant's feet.

"I don't look like that?" cried Sly Fox.

"I just made your picture," said Mole in a sleepy voice, "and nobody can say that I ever took the wrong animal. Isn't your name Sly Fox?"

"O, yes," replied Sly Fox, "but I am a very handsome animal."

"I can't see that you are," replied the Mole. "That is your picture, and now you'll have to pay for it."

So Ugly Dog and Mole took the money for a dozen pictures and put the photograph up just in front of Sly Fox, where he could see it and could not reach it.

"Take it away. Take it away," cried Sly Fox.

Ugly Dog and Mole went away to dinner and left Sly Fox sitting in the chair snarling and crying. He stayed there for two hours, until his friend Patrick O'Possum came along and unscrewed the tongs and let him go. Ever since that Sly Fox has not been nearly so proud of himself, and he has never played another trick on Ugly Dog.

"'O, MY! O, MY! TAKE IT AWAY!'"

Famous Girls' Schools.

XIII.—HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS COLLEGE.

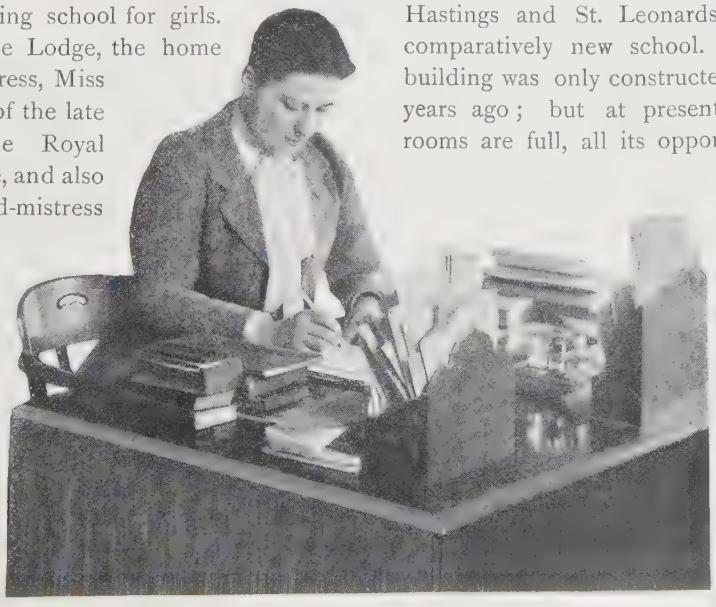
By CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

A VIEW OF THE COLLEGE BUILDINGS, AND OF THE HEAD-MISTRESS'S HOUSE, DANE LODGE, ON THE RIGHT.

During all cruel and stormy weather there are some pleasant corners in our country to be discovered, where one might imagine there was no winter. The town of St. Leonards is one of these. Sheltered in a cradle of cliffs, it turns its face to the bright sun, to a warm sea, and probably gets more of the benefits of such a situation in finely tempered breezes and glancing sunlight, through even the dullest and coldest months, than any town in England.

High up on the cliffs behind St. Leonards, where pretty houses are built, and the streets curve into the beautiful country beyond, the mildness of the air at "the front" is freshened into an exhilarating keenness. In Dane Road, one of the prettiest of the curving streets, stands Hastings and St. Leonards College, a day and boarding school for girls. Beside it is Dane Lodge, the home of the Head-mistress, Miss Bishop, a sister of the late Principal of the Royal Holloway College, and also of the late Head-mistress of the Brighton High School.

Of all bright and pleasant places, Hastings and St. Leonards College occupies one of the brightest and most pleasant. As though to match their surroundings in every particular, the College and House impress one with the same satisfactory feeling of sunshine and healthfulness. It is quite certain, even on the face of things, that young lives are being lived there under the best and loveliest conditions. It is also quite certain that the conditions are very happy ones for the girls of the St. Leonards College. For the spirit of a school is as easily to be distinguished as the colour of the school-room wall-paper. Hastings and St. Leonards College is a comparatively new school. The present building was only constructed some twelve years ago; but at present all its wide rooms are full, all its opportunities taken advantage of. It is a high structure of red brick, prettily designed. Green lawns flank it on either side, and there is a playground attached.



MISS BISHOP.

The Head Mistress of Hastings and St. Leonards College.

Inside, although designed and decorated

THE GIRLS' SCHOOLROOM AT DANE LODGE.
The home of the Head-Mistress; here the boarders reside.

with due regard to the greatest simplicity, the building forms one of the prettiest of schools. Corridors of turquoise blue tinted dado, and white walls, lead into bright and well-lighted schoolrooms. There the ruling blue and white tinting makes a pretty quality of background for a few pictures or flowers, and in school hours for the crowd of girls who occupy each desk so busily.

Every class-room has a framed autotype of one of the most famous "Madonna and Child" pictures. These hang in the places of honour, above a motto illuminated or worked by either the girls or teachers of the St. Leonards School.

There are special rooms devoted to kindergarten, where baby children learn the nicest and pleasantest ways of growing up, and find their way made easy into the realms of real lessons, of writing in books, of sewing and singing.

But the pride of the school ought surely to culminate in a splendid gymnasium, which is quite a unique and special gymnasium, even in these days. Windows on three sides go quite up to a high roof. All the usual gymnastic appliances are fixtures, but the room itself is a play-room and work-room of such brightness and comfort, that many events, besides the usual drill of gymnastic exercises, occur within its walls. Class singing, orchestral practice, dancing, and prize-giving, all take place in the school's big play-room.

Specimens of the girls' work are dotted over the lower walls. Some botanical drawings in water-colours are more than usually cleverly and prettily done. Indeed, Miss Bishop has seen to it, that botany is not only encouraged by the natural advantages of the situation of the school; the girls possess a lantern, for which they provide many of the slides. They collect and prepare specimens, then afterwards

have the satisfaction of seeing their work reflected on the huge screen which is stretched across the gymnasium on these special occasions.

Besides the botanical specimens, there are many things of interest shown on the walls of the gymnasium. Notable amongst these is a tennis shield, very prettily carved by one of the girls. The carving represents the St. Leonards Arms, and below it are the names of all the school champions in tennis, become through time so numerous as to necessitate a second shield in the near future.

Hastings and St. Leonards College takes a high place in its ordinary examinations, which are conducted yearly by the Cambridge Syndicate. Girls besides have distinguished themselves in public examination, notably in drawing and music.

Drawing is taught very sensibly in the St. Leonards College. Only the beginnings of things artistic are to be learnt in schools, and it is a splendid advantage to girls when these beginnings happen to be the very best possible beginnings.

Little babies even, are taught at this College to observe first; then to draw and paint from their own observation of things. One day it is a sprig of holly which is to be painted from nature. It is set up before the children, and the whole class sets to work. Leaves and stalks are indicated by the brush. The class paints the leaf after the teacher has done it her way on a board in sight of them all. At each new step the teacher asks questions and criticises. Children discover delightedly how the high light on a holly berry is to be managed in the cleverest possible way, by leaving just one little blank space in the round of red—how holly berries stick to one branch almost as though they were gummed there; not as is the way of cherries, hanging heavily and independently very far away from the parent stem.

As a music mistress, the St. Leonards Col-

CHILDREN OF THE KINDERGARTEN BUSY THEMSELVES EACH MORNING MODELLING IN CLAY, AND IN OTHER DELIGHTFUL PURSUITS.

lege is very fortunate in having Miss Daymond, the first lady to take the degree of Doctor of Music in the University of Oxford. Miss Daymond not only gives individual lessons; she has a very efficient choral and also an orchestral class, doing very good work under her direction. Miss Daymond's training for her well-won degree enables her to know everything which is essential to good *ensemble* playing, as well as to individual performances. It is to her most careful instruction and unwearied enthusiasm, that not only does her choral class sing in time and tune, and with a due regard to musical expression, but it learns to discriminate between vowel and vowel, between word phrases and musical phrases. The orchestral class accompanies the chorus on occasion, and gets very good practice besides, in adaptions from Corelli, Bach, etc., for a band necessarily short of many instruments. The girls play with a very good sense of tone, and a spirit which is the best evidence of the interest and pleasure they derive from their work.

To the ordinary work and drill of the school, Miss Bishop is always adding what she considers beneficial to her girls, as she knows how to eliminate what is of small consequence. Every morning her house girls have to adopt a breathing exercise, which trains them to breathe fully and freely with their lungs, and to develop these in the right places. For it is possible to develop one's lungs in quite the wrong places, into our shoulder-blades for instance; so that any exercise which gets us into the habit when young, of breathing in a right and healthy manner, is not at all to be laughed at.

To know exactly how the influence of Miss Bishop and of the school, not only spreads within the walls of the school, but reaches out into remote corners of the world, "The Newsletter," the school chronicle, shows one very clearly.

"The Newsletter," although contributed to in part by the girls, is issued under the direct supervision of Miss Kennedy, the Vice-Principal of the College, who is a niece of the celebrated Professor Blackie. It is intended to give all the current year's news as concisely as possible, and makes no attempt towards being a magazine run by the girls themselves. But here and there some of the girls contribute personal accounts of different school events, while letters from old girls make really valuable reading.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS COLLEGE HAS A REDOUBTABLE HOCKEY ELEVEN.
These are the girls who are this season defending the honour of their College on the hockey field.

THE COLLEGE'S STRING BAND.

Miss Daymond, the Music Mistress, and the first woman to take the degree of Mus. Doc. in the University of Oxford, is shown conducting.

The Hastings and St. Leonards College keeps in touch with the girls who have been educated within its walls, and the brief news of old girls, with a short account of whatever occupation each girl has devoted herself to, is most interesting even to people who have never known the St. Leonards girls. Girls all over the world write to their home school: from Shanghai, St. Petersburg, Burmah, and anywhere. Nearly all of them seem to be

MISS KENNEDY, THE VICE-PRINCIPAL OF THE COLLEGE, INSTRUCTS A CLASS OF SENIOR GIRLS.

doing something useful, and getting on very well indeed.

The Old Girls' Association is responsible for these girls keeping in touch with their school. At the same time it preserves before the present pupils—who are the women of the future—the fact of their own lives having to be lived after their school days are over, and no doubt encourages many of them to dream of the same usefulness.

The United Girls' School Mission has many warm supporters at the St. Leonards School,

COLLEGE GIRLS GOING THROUGH A BREATHING EXERCISE.

Miss Bishop holds that his exercise trains her girls to breathe freely, and to develop their lungs in the right places.

and an account by one of the Dane's girls of an entertainment to a choir of men and boys, makes a bright page in "The Newsletter."

Amongst the games played at St. Leonards School are tennis, hockey, and the American game of basket ball. The last game has become very popular with the girls, and is much enjoyed as an after-dinner game by those who are at college all day.

The girls also go for school bicycle rides; and for their picnics a good number of them ride while the others drive.

There is a Natural History Society, which benefits greatly from the long walks which the girls often take. During these walks the girls collect treasures for their lectures and the school museum. In one of the Natural History walks they found more than forty kinds of flowers, including one or two which were new to them. These flowers often find their way into the "Nature Journals," kept individually by the St. Leonards girls. Here not only flowers are treasured, but the girls write short descriptions of what they have seen or thought, and date them accordingly. In this way they learn not only to observe and to collect, but to express their own thoughts in the best possible manner. Amongst the girls of St. Leonards College there is a strong love of nature study. This feeling for the beautiful things of nature has been fostered in them through the influence and delightful teaching of Miss Kennedy.

At the beginning of last year a system of prefects was inaugurated, which gives some of the elder girls an official position corresponding to that of the prefects in boys' schools. Their duties are to take charge generally in the absence of mistresses. The St. Leonards prefects wear as a badge a silver triangle with the inscription *Fortiter*, *Fideliter*, *Feliciter*, and as "The Newsletter" and everyone else declares: "Their work is done in the spirit of the motto, with untiring diligence and enthusiasm."

The Hastings and St. Leonards School is a purely local college, governed and administrated

by St. Leonards gentlemen. Nothing is attempted towards making the boarding side of the school any more generally known than through the private *clientèle* which the day school has already established. The House, therefore, seldom contains more than sixteen girls, who range from all ages, and are more like a big family party of girls than a schoolful of them. And whether they study in their pretty study with its long windows showing the stretch of gardens beyond, or chatter in the bright bedrooms, with snow-white curtains making separate rooms for them, or whether they visit in Miss Bishop's drawing-room, which is not at all like school, but daintily furnished in pieces of fine old furniture and bric-à-brac, the Dane Lodge girls may congratulate themselves.

Besides all the usual routine of lessons, sports and school concerts, the girls have opportunities of hearing very good music and lectures. They interest themselves also in photography, and have a dark room fitted up for their special use.

Indeed, there is not much left out of the curriculum of work and play at St. Leonards School which goes towards the enjoyment and accomplishment of the best things in life. The girls of Hastings and St. Leonards College have fresh air to breathe, more sunshine than is allotted to most English towns, a free and healthy open-air life, and a happy picturesque one when indoors.

The following institutions have been treated in this series of "Famous Girls' Schools":—

December, 1899.—Cheltenham Ladies' College.
February, 1900.—Wycombe Abbey.
April, 1900.—Frances Mary Buss Schools.
September, 1900.—Roedean.
December, 1900.—The Grey Coat Hospital.
March, 1901.—Edinburgh Ladies' College.
May, 1901.—Blackheath High School.
July, 1901.—Royal School, Bath.
August, 1901.—Bedford High School.
September, 1901.—St. Katharines, N.B.
December, 1901.—Victoria College, Belfast.
January, 1902.—The Mary Datchelor School.

THE RESULT OF THE PICTURE PUZZLES COMPETITION.

BABY AND ME AND THE DOG.
A photograph sent in by Marjorie Macquordale, one of my girl-readers.

A GREAT number of girls entered for the competition to give the names of six pictures representing towns visited by the Duke and Duchess of York on their Colonial Tour, but it is surprising to find how few got all the names right. The correct names are:—

1. Aden.
2. Singapore.
3. Ballarat.
4. Freemantle.
5. Kilmany.
6. Auckland.

The fifth picture was the stumbling-block to most competitors, and it was amusing to see the various attempts that were made to guess the puzzle. "Batu" was a very good guess; "Shotover," "Kilmore," "Bang-cock" (Bankok) were all excellent—still only "Kilmany" was correct, as that was what the artist has settled upon. The first correct answer opened was that sent in by Margery Henly, Northfields, Calne, Wiltshire, who secures the first prize of 10/6. The second prize (7/6) goes to Isobel Pim, 17, Coleherne Road, South Kensington, London, S.W.; and the third (5/-) to Amy Walter, Ecclesbourne, New Wanstead, Essex.

A VERY JONAH.

The Tale of a Dog.

BY KATHERINE TYNAN.

Illustrated by MAY TOURTEL.

He was one of a litter of five puppies which were born under the manger in the pony's stall. No one troubled to drown them, but the pony's feet accounted for two in a very short space of time, and they were the two prettiest. Then various people came in and inspected what was left of the litter, and took away his two brothers. So he only was left.

He was not old enough to miss their society. His idea of enjoying himself was to sleep a great deal under his mother's silky and warm side, and when he had slept himself wide awake, to crawl over her in the darkness under the manger and tug at her long ears in a state of contentment which ought to have lasted for ever.

The day came, however, when the mother took him for his first walk. She was a pretty creature wrapped up in soft fur of a golden-chestnut colour, bright-eyed, graceful, and with a timid fawning manner which won her caresses even from rough folk.

The puppy, however, was broad and squat. Not a sign of a curl appeared on his sleek, bloated sides. His eyes were very small and his cheeks pendulous. He sprawled helplessly, his little body flat in the effort his soft pads made to take hold on the smooth cobble-stones of the farmyard.

There were two dogs standing in the midst of the farmyard watching the progress of Flo and her puppy. One was a smooth brown terrier. He had a bored and cynical air, and he looked beyond pretty Flo and the ugly puppy, who bore a disgusting resemblance to himself, as though he did not see them.

The other, a sheep-dog, wore a grieved expression, in addition to his usual sharp anxiety, but his eyes were kind and honest as he watched the approach of mother and son.

"What do you think of him?" asked Flo, indicating the waddling puppy, as she came up to the pair of men-folk.

The terrier looked farther away than ever. The sheep-dog shook his grey head.

"He's not good-looking, Flo," he said. "I can't think who he resembles."

The puppy listened, unable to make it out, but watching intelligently from his slits of eyes.

"Perhaps he'll be clever," went on the sheep-dog, consolingly. "Good looks and cleverness don't always go together."

"I didn't think he was so bad as that," answered Flo, looking at the puppy with an expression which, fortunately, he did not understand.

"His head is so big," said the sheep-dog, "and his figure so ill-formed. His ears are prettily marked, but then his nose is so turned up, and his eyes mere pin-points. And he will have no coat. I never think a dog good-looking myself unless he stands high, and has a good coat, with a ruff, and a long nose and a well-feathered tail. You agree with me, Jock?"—to the terrier.

"I haven't been listening to you," said the terrier with an ostentatious yawn. "I suppose you are talking about yourself as usual. All I know is, there is room here for no more dogs. The grub is scarce enough as it is."

Then he walked away with an air of having his hands in his pockets.

"I'm sure I'm sorry for you, Flo," said the sheep-dog, pricking up his ears for the shepherd's whistle. "It was hard luck that you should have kept the ugliest one. Let us hope he'll turn out better than we think."

Then he galloped off as fast as his legs would carry him, while Flo, dispirited, took her son back to the stable.

A day or two afterwards the puppy tweaked his mother's ears rather more sharply than usual. To his amazement he was suddenly taken up and shaken as though he were a rat. He was gasping for breath when he was put down, and felt his hitherto kind, warm world slipping away from him.

"You are unlucky, that's what you are!" his mother said angrily, "and I am the unlucky dog to be the mother of anything so ugly."

It was the first time he had heard the epithet which was to cling to him for so many years of his life. Immediately afterwards Flo got sorry, and licked him all over from head to foot, repeating to herself, with the illogicality of her sex, that he wasn't ugly, and if he was, it was all the more reason for his own mother to be fond of him.

The puppy forgave, being as forgiving as a puppy usually is, yet he thought a good deal over that moment when his mother had shaken him, and he had felt his world tumbling to pieces. He had brains, as the sheep-dog had discovered; and too early he realised that the world was not simply a round ball for puppies to play with.

Afterwards his mother's affection gradually cooled, so gradually that it was no shock to him when she came to receive his playful onslaughts with growling and snapping. He was nearly always "unlucky" now; unlucky because the pony had not trodden on him rather than his brother and sister, unlucky because his drowning had been overlooked, unlucky to be so ugly, to be so healthy, unlucky for a thousand reasons not usually associated with ill-luck.

However, being incurably cheerful, the puppy did not take his mother's scoldings much to heart. Indeed, he hardly missed her when she became a stranger to him since he had been adopted by the farmer's little daughter, a pink-frocked, brown-eyed little haymaker, in whose fat arms it was a joy to be hugged, even if the hugging was rather on the side of strangulation.

His devotion to his little mistress was entire. Everywhere she went he followed her, and the excursions were pleasant ones—through meadows where the brown grass, the poppies, and moon-daisies hid dog and child, along leafy country lanes, in garden and orchard, by winding streams fringed with meadow-sweet, overhung by alders, everywhere a free country-child's wandering feet might carry her.

Sometimes they rode in the hay-waggons, or tumbled in the heaps of fragrant hay in the meadows. It was on some such merry-making that the child lost her sun-bonnet, and wandered in the sun with no one to restrain her, for what could a puppy know about such matters?

That evening she was heavy with sleep. The puppy could not tempt her to play, though after supper in the farmhouse kitchen he tried by every means in his power to attract her attention to the woollen ball she was expected to throw to him. At last she was carried upstairs in her mother's arms, and the puppy creeping after, settled himself under her little bed for the night, none being the wiser.

Some time, when the night was very dark, he saw his little mistress's mother come in with a candle. He was wide awake, for the child had been moaning and tossing, and talking a great deal in a strange voice, and had taken no notice at all when he had jumped upon her cot and licked her hand to let her know he was there.

Afterwards there was a great commotion. The whole house was awake, though it was the middle of the night, and a stranger came and stood by the little cot and felt the child's pulse, and did many strange things, the meaning of which the puppy, who crouched under the cot, vaguely terrified, did not understand.

Then he was shut out of the room, and whenever he tried to insinuate himself by the open door, he was discovered and turned out again; and once he was squeezed in the door and yelped in terror, and someone kicked him, and he stole away, feeling very much ashamed of himself for having yelped, because he understood the kick was given not in cruelty, but in the mere irritation of great unhappiness.

The misery of those days really transcended in his mind all he suffered afterwards, for a dog's fear and terror when someone he loves is threatened, is a blind suffering for which there is no comparison.

At last he was taken away by a young maid-servant and dropped into a house under a hay rick, where the light only came through chinks, and where he seemed to be forgotten, though he whined and scratched every time he heard a foot pass by.

He might have been there only a day, or

perhaps two, or maybe three. His suffering took no count of time. Once a grimy hand put in food and water to him, and he caught a glimpse of Kate, the farm-servant's face in the gloom. But for all the frantic welcome he gave her he did not get his liberty as he desired. She flung him back on a heap of rubbish and closed the door upon him before he could regain his footing.

At last he was let out, and made a frantic dash for his little mistress's room. As he passed through the kitchen he hardly noticed that Kate stood idly with her apron to her eyes. His mother and Jock, the brown terrier, sat before a cold hearth, with drooping heads. All the doors stood open: the house had an empty, uncared-for look.

He flew frantically upstairs to the room where he had last seen her. It was dark: all the blinds were down, the cot was empty, and there were flowers strewn upon it. She was not anywhere.

He raced through the house, scenting for her. There was no trace of her; and in the days that followed, though he was always having delusive hopes, remembering places he had not searched for her, and which they had visited together, he never found her.

Once her father kicked him aside with a groan.

"He is unlucky," he said. "I wish we had drowned him."

Then he went out, and his wife, who had been going about her household work as though she dragged the world at her heels, picked up the puppy and comforted him.

"You are indeed unlucky," she said, "for you have lost her. She has gone farther away than you will follow her."

The puppy pricked up his ears at that. He had the disadvantage of his cleverness that he knew too much for his age, and understood so much of what was said to him without being able to piece things together.

Therefore, when the mother had put him down gently, and turned away sobbing, he rushed out of the house, and without pausing to take an older dog's advice, ran away down the open road as fast as his feet could carry him.

They were wrong, he thought, if they fancied he would not follow her far enough. She might have only gone to her grandmother's in the market town as she had done before. He never paused to think if he were not perhaps turning his back upon the town, but ran on fast, feeling sure that if he did not find her to-day he would to-morrow. Being so young he had heart enough for anything except the chilly house without her, and the something which terrified him in her father's and mother's faces.

It was July when he ran away. The time turned round to winter, and yet he had not found her, though he travelled incessantly. He had good and bad fortune in the people he met. Sometimes a child would give him a crust, or a kind woman a saucer of milk. Then for that a boy would throw a stone at him, or there would be a chorus of yells upon his path that would send him flying with his ears back and his nose to the ground in blind panic till he had distanced his pursuers.

On one of these occasions a policeman aimed a blow at him with his truncheon. Fortunately he did not know the meaning of that, and though many joined in the pursuit he managed to distance them till he reached open country and a hayrick with a hole in its side, into which he was able to creep and lie hidden till he had recovered from the beating of his heart.

After that he liked to avoid towns if he could, or, if they lay directly in his path, to slink through them, almost flattened against the house-walls, with a suspiciousness of aspect that brought many a stone after him, where he had gone safe if he had walked like a dog with an owner.

He knew what it was to be thirsty and foot-sore in summer, to be sodden and hungry and frost-bitten in winter. He was commonly lame, from the flints of the highways or the thorns of the hedgerows. As he grew older he had sometimes quarrels forced upon him by other dogs, and was often wounded, and carried many scars, which added to his disreputable appearance.

If he had only known, kind people would have rescued him many a time, and given

him a happy home; but he had come to believe the world a place of kicks and rough words, of flying stones, and even of kettles tied to a wandering dog's tail, where it was best for a dog to slink along so as not to attract attention if he would keep a comparatively whole skin.

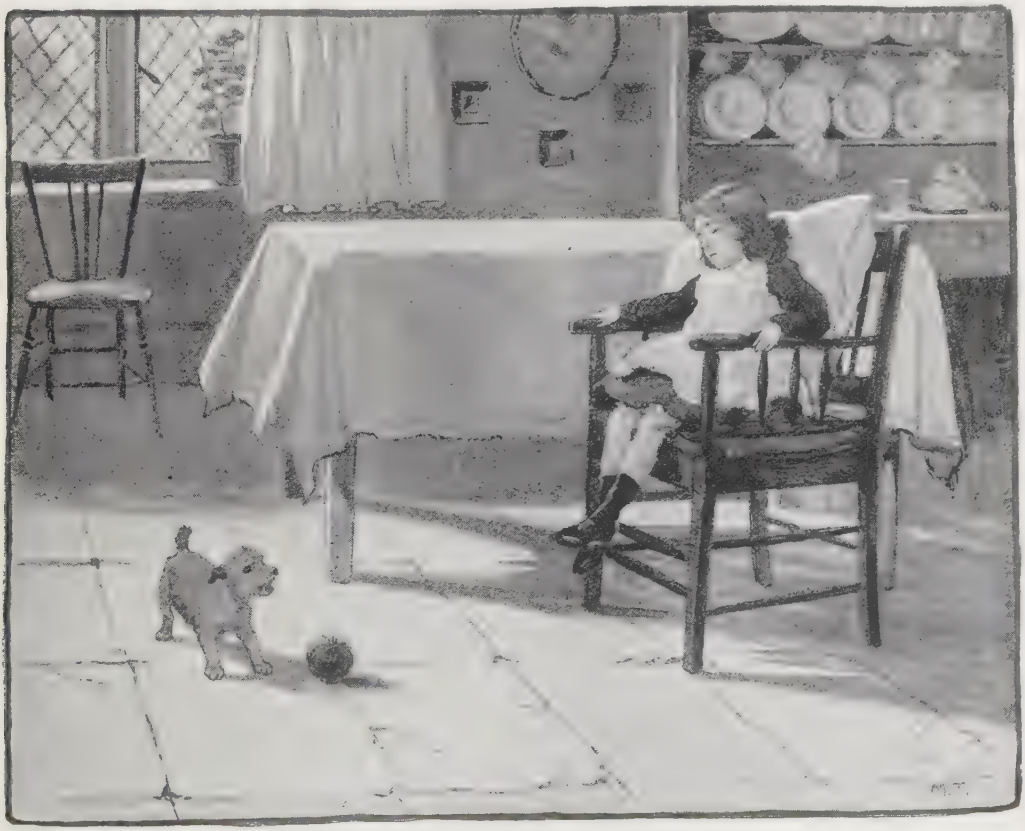
Once he spent a week in a hole under a railway-platform, and that was the most terrifying experience of all, for the place was in the bowels of the earth, and the noise of the incessant trains nearly scared him out of what senses he had left.

While he was there people came and obscured the entrance to the hole, trying to get a sight of him, and he heard them calling him delusively through the shriek and rattle of the trains. But he only pressed farther into his tunnel. Sometimes, when the noises ceased for a while, or were farther off, he would creep out and find scraps of meat and some sooty water placed just outside the hole.

By this time he had almost forgotten the original object of his quest. His little mistress, his mother, the sheep-dog, Jock the handsome terrier, all were forgotten, or only came back to his mind when someone who had tried to entice him from his safe hiding-hole desisted, calling him "an unlucky little beggar."

At last he escaped from this fearful trap, travelling miles through black tunnels, where shrieking things with one great fiery eye rushed down upon him from every direction, till at last he emerged in open air, and found a steep bank of very dirty grass up which he climbed into the world again.

He was half-crazy by this time, and grimed from head to foot, so that the first urchin who



"THE PUPPY COULD NOT TEMPT HIS LITTLE MISTRESS TO PLAY, THOUGH HE TRIED BY EVERY MEANS IN HIS POWER TO ATTRACT HER ATTENTION TO THE WOOLLEN BALL SHE WAS EXPECTED TO THROW TO HIM."—(*p.* 511.)

saw him slinking under an archway took aim at him with a stone, with the most happy result.

The dog—he was about two years old now, but he thought he had lived through ages—pulled up short with an agonising yell. Then he slunk back in the darkest part of the arch and fell to licking his leg. The boy had, meanwhile, gone on his way whistling, though he would have felt more meritorious, no doubt, if he had known that the cur's leg was broken.

After a time another boy came that way, a pale, peaked, suffering-looking child, with a satchel of books on his back. He caught sight of something stirring in the darkest corner of the archway. His eyes, bright with the feverishness of pain, were very observant.

"Why, it is a dog," he said to himself.

Then he climbed over the bit of railing which divided him from the dog, who left off licking his paw, and drew back growling, ready to defend his wretched life, since there was no escape for him.

The boy lifted him up gently, and cradled him in his arms in a way that made the dog shiver with a sudden pang of memory.

"Don't be afraid," said the child's thin little voice, "as though I should hurt you! And, I say, your leg is hurt too. Never mind: I shall take you to Daddy, and he will put that straight."

A blessed sense of re-assurance crept into the dog's heart. He stopped growling, and licked the pale little face instead. Even the agony of his leg was nothing in comparison with the sudden relief from the hunted feeling which he had known for so long, which he had thought never to lose again.

He did not even moan when the boy, on his homeward way, shifted him a little and something like a red-hot iron shot through his leg.

Presently they reached an open door and went in, and up a great many flights of stairs, all very black and grimy, and with horrible grey walls scratched all over, and full of damp stains.

The last flight or so the dog was conscious of a queer squealing sound which caused him a sensation half rapture and half pain, so that he had an inclination to lift his head and whine in unison with the sound.

Then the boy opened a door and went in. There was a man sitting in the room with a great shock of soft fair hair and eyes that looked far, far away, as though they saw something beautiful. The sounds were coming from a strange thing he held on his shoulder, across which he drew a long double stick, or so it seemed to the dog. There was a delicious savoury smell in the room, which almost made the hungry dog forget the sounds he had heard and the increasing pain of his leg.

"Ah, Fritz, is it thou?" said the man. "And what starveling hast thou brought us?"

"What good thing is there in the pipkin, Daddy?" said the boy. "It smells very good."

"Ah, little friend, it is something good. I picked up a lady's purse which she had dropped, and she gave me a whole bright shilling, so I thought I would come home and cook thee something, for thou hadst a poor breakfast, and afterwards we should go to the Abbey, thou and I, or I would play for thee all the afternoon, as thou wouldst."

"See this poor thing, Daddy?" said the boy. "His paw is hurt. He must have had a bad time, for he was afraid of me and growled. What can we do for him?"

The man laid down the thing which had made the music—and which the dog knew very soon as the fiddle—upon the bed as though it were a child.

"Let me see it, Fritz," he said, taking the dog on his knee and examining the injured leg. "Alas, it is broken! Who was so cruel as to do it?"

"What matter? You will mend it, Daddy, as you mended poor Dicky's claw when he broke it."

"I will do my best. Hast thou fortitude to bear it, little one? Ah, see, Fritz, he says 'yes.' How wise they are, those creatures of the good God! To think anyone should be found to maltreat them!"

The boy knelt down by his father while the dog's leg was put in splints and bandaged. At one time the pain was excruciating, but the dog's tongue only licked their hands the harder.

"It is a grateful soul," said the man, when

the little operation was finished and the dog lay on the bed by the fiddle, which he watched somewhat suspiciously.

Nor did they forget to feed him with scraps of the savoury meal, nor to give him a drink of clean water.

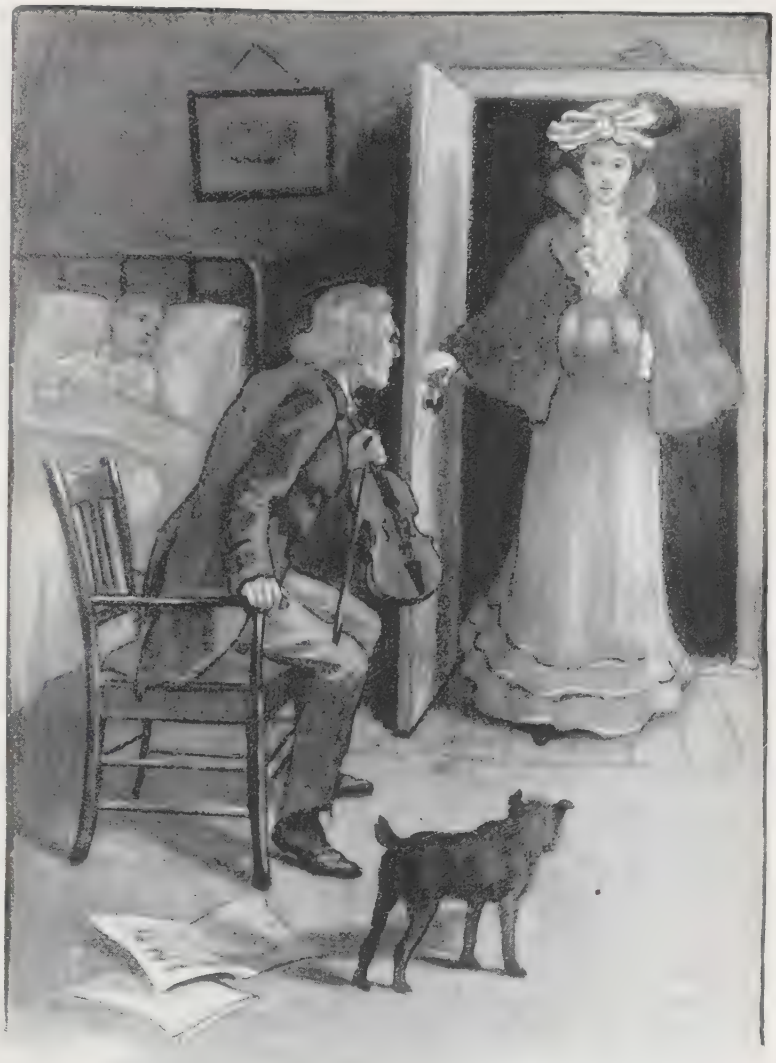
Afterwards the boy made a little fire because the afternoon was chilly, and they were to stay at home for their guest's sake, and the dog, being transferred to the hearth, lay blinking in the firelight as he had never thought to do again. The boy lay along the narrow strip of rug beside him, with his hands behind his head, smiling to himself as at something delightful, while for hours the squealing of the fiddle went on, and it took all the dog's natural politeness not to show the torture it inflicted.

Afterwards, when the thing was put away in a velvet-lined case, came a time of perfect peace. The room was quite clean and sweet, and there were pots of musk on the window ledge, and many pictures on the walls, and a gay quilt on the bed, and everything sweet and seemly; though, indeed, the dog had no appreciation for anything but the kindness and comfort.

After that he learned to keep the house every day while the Fritzes, father and son, were abroad. It was lonely, but then he could not have got very far on his broken leg, and there was always the delightful hour when little Fritz returned and set out the evening meal, and presently big Fritz came in too, and there were the lamp-lit hours which even the squealing of the fiddle could hardly mar.

But one day while he was alone a heavy foot sounded on the staircase, and someone rapped at the door in a noisy way which irritated the dog, no longer homeless and friendless, so that he barked angrily.

After a time the footsteps went away. But



"'WHAT WOULD YOUR HIGHNESS DO WITH US?' SAID FRITZ, FLINGING BACK HIS SOFT, WILD HAIR."—(*p.* 517.)

that evening, just as they were sitting down to a delicious meal of sausage, for big Fritz had had another stroke of luck, and it was a plentiful day, the heavy feet were heard again outside the door.

Then a big man, dressed in blue, came in and set down a strip of blue paper in the midst of the meal.

"I understand," he said, "that you are keeping a dog without a licence, and you are hereby summoned to appear before the magistrate to answer for it."

"Ach, Gott!" cried big Fritz, staring wildly; "what for?"

"For keeping a dog without a licence," repeated the policeman, stolidly. "There's no use denying it, for I see the dog and hear him too."

"I never thought to deny it," said Fritz. "The boy brought it home. The leg was broken all to bits. Wouldst thou have had us cast it on the cruel streets once more?"

"I'm not here to argufy with you," answered the policeman. "You can say all that to his Worship. It'll be ten shillings, or seven days maybe."

"But I did not know," said Fritz, "and what remained for us to do seeing the limb was broken? Has thy law no heart?"

"If you say that in the Court it might be fourteen days," said the policeman. "Here, let's look at the baste. Come here, you bit of bad luck!"

The dog crept towards him with some idea of propitiating one he saw to be powerful, and timidly licked the policeman's big hand.

"'Tis a friendly bit of bad luck," said the policeman, looking pleased, "and I'm sorry for you, my friend, so I am," to big Fritz. "Maybe there'll be someone to pay the fine for you."

"Ah, thanks," said big Fritz, "but do not call the little dog so, I pray you. He is the creature of the good God, and the good God doubtless sent him to us."

The policeman stared.

"Sure may he be a bit of good luck to you!" he said, kindly, "I don't agree meself wid them licences an' things, an' I wouldn't mind plankin' down a shillin' towards the fine. You'll see me about the Court a-Wednesday."

"It will be a friend's face," said big Fritz, gratefully.

The dog fretted much in the intervening days between that and Wednesday to think he should have brought ill-luck to those who had been so good to him; but there was no change in their manner to him, only, if possible, they were more affectionate.

Sometimes big Fritz would drop the fiddle and put it away like a child tired of crying, and talk to little Fritz about what was to be done in case he had to go to prison in default of the money to pay the fine. Their calculations always ended the one way. The money was not forthcoming. True: but the good God was in His Heaven, and He would take care of motherless and ailing little Fritz till his father returned to him.

Then the dog found himself one morning in little Fritz's arms in a place crowded with people, which he supposed to be the Court.

An amiable-looking old gentleman with glasses leant upon a high desk and listened to the proceedings, making marks upon his blotting-pad as though he heard nothing, yet his eyes looked very wide awake.

After a time big Fritz was called. "Fritz Koerner, wandering musician."

He stumbled forward, very pale.

"Believe, Worship," he said, "I had no thought to break the law. My son brought me the little dog. Here he is, Worship! His leg was broken. What could we do but take him in and mend it?"

"You are a foreigner, Mr. Koerner?" said the old gentleman, peering at him.

"An Alsatian, Worship."

"'Tis no excuse for breaking the law of the country you live in. You should not have sheltered the dog if you did not intend to pay the licence."

"Worship, I had not the money. We are very poor. I play Schubert, Bach, Schumann; the people pass me by."

"I am very sorry for you. You are certainly unlucky. You should have turned the dog into the street again."

"With a broken leg! Ach, dear God, no, Worship!"

"It is the law. You must pay a fine of half-

a-crown in addition to the cost of the licence. It is the least I can make it."

Big Fritz threw out his hands with a gesture of despair, and at the sight the dog burst into a howl of sympathy and sorrow for his own misfortune that he should have brought ill-luck to those who had sheltered him. Why had he not died before it had come to that?

A gentleman, with a curious curled headdress, rose in the Court.

"If you please, your Worship," he said, "I should like to pay the half-sovereign for this man."

At the other side one of a body of men sitting at a table stood up.

"I and my colleagues at the reporters' table, your Worship, have a similar wish," he said.

"Those expressions of feeling do you great credit, gentlemen," said the magistrate, "but I may mention that I have already paid in the amount. As a matter of fact, I never intended that the man should suffer for his act of benevolence, but the letter of the law is against him, though not its spirit."

As they went out of the Court, the two Fritzes and the dog, in an ecstasy of gratitude, the policeman who had brought the summons slipped some coins into little Fritz's hand.

"From meself," he said, "an' a few members of the Force, towards the little baste's keep."

For days after that the newspapers were full of letters about Fritz Koerner's case, and various sums of money were sent for him and the boy to the magistrate and the editors of newspapers. But of this the Fritzes knew nothing. Little Fritz had a feverish attack, brought on by anxiety, and big Fritz stayed at home to nurse him. The gifts of the kind policemen and the gentlemen in Court kept the cupboard unusually full. And all day the fiddle cried its Te Deums, while little Fritz sat among his pillows, smiling as though he saw the angels, and the dog stifled his own feelings about the music because he saw that it made his protectors so happy.

They were in the midst of the Ave Maria of Schubert, big Fritz playing from a ragged score, and rocking in an ecstasy of satisfaction, so that no one but the dog heard a gentle knock at the door, which came once and was not repeated. Then the last sob of the fiddle died down; and immediately the door was pushed open, and a lady came in.

She was a most beautiful lady, and she was dressed as befitted her beauty. In the sudden silence the champing of horses could be heard in the alley below.

The lady looked all about her with sparkling eyes.

"You are Fritz Koerner," she said, "and this is the child, and this the dog?"

"Yes, lady," said big Fritz, flinging back his soft wild hair. "What would your Highness do with us?"

"Give me a chair, please," she said, as though she were accustomed to obedience, "and play for me. I want to hear more of your music."

She sat smiling while big Fritz played, and her smile had the same quiet radiance which the fiddle brought to the faces of the two Fritzes.

At last she sprang to her feet.

"I must stay no longer," she said, "or my coachman will give me warning. You are a musician, my friend. Would you like to live in a little house in my park, and be my . . . shall we call it Chapel-Master? It will be better than flinging pearls before swine in the city streets."

"Lady!" gasped Fritz, and could say no more.

"It will be lonely," she said, smiling. "Nothing but miles and miles of green country. But it will be good for the child. And you will have your fill of music."

"You offer us Heaven, Highness," said big Fritz, with rapturous closed eyes.

"Then I shall send someone to arrange things. I am the Duchess of D——. You will bring the dog also. I shall be a friend to him as well."

* * * * *

"Dear Heaven," cried big Fritz to the dog, when the radiant vision had departed, leaving the trail of its beautiful presence behind, "to think that anyone should have dared to call thee unlucky!"

K K

SOME FAVOURITES AT THE ZOO.

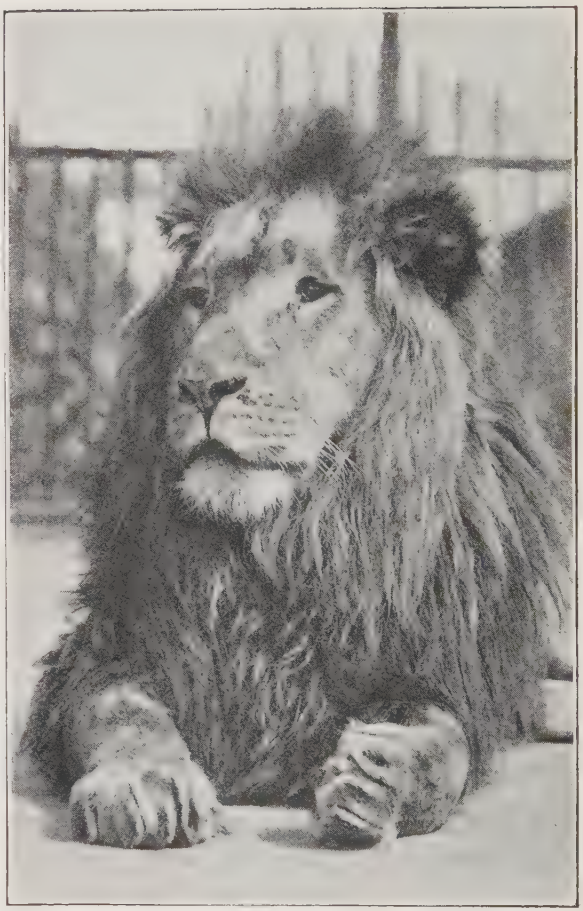
By GEORGE A WADE.

WHEN I was asked by the editor of THE GIRL'S REALM to write an article for her readers on this fascinating subject, I resolved to adopt various methods to ascertain which were the favourite animals at the Zoo, in order to be sure of getting the right ones. I first went back to my own experience as a boy; then I took my own children to the famous Gardens again, resolved to pay close attention to those animals they most wished to watch and play with; then I observed closely whilst there, the creatures that received most notice from the crowds that flock on any fine day to the select part of Regent's Park.

The elephant came out first on the list, tested by all three methods. So I had a long chat with the keeper of the elephants. He told me a lot about them, especially about "Sophy," the big one, on which so many youngsters—and "oldsters," too—have ridden since the days of poor Jumbo and Alice. Sophy's reign at the Zoo has already extended to twenty-four years. There is not much of elephant lore you can teach Sophy. The keeper took me quietly up to her "den," where she stood extending her trunk for any buns we might chance to have. He told me to throw a coin in, which I did, and the threepenny-piece fell flat on the stone floor. At first Sophy was too intent on buns to look after money. The keeper reminded her of it.

"Sophy," said he, sternly, "are you going to pick that money up for this gentleman, or not?"

And Sophy hurried and picked up that little flat threepenny-piece from the floor with her trunk in a marvellous way. I held out my hand for it, but Sophy winked, and dropped it into that of her keeper with a knowing toss of her trunk.



Photo, Dixon & Sons.

THE LION CHALLENGES THE WORLD.

This great fellow is the largest lion in the Gardens.

It would take an article in itself to recount all the stories I heard from the keepers about present and past elephants. There is a good tale told of a former elephant. It is said that a gentleman threw a threepenny-piece to Jumbo, and that the coin rolled back from the den towards the wall facing it, just well out of reach of the animal's extended trunk. The keeper told the thrower to leave the coin where it was, and to watch the beast's intelligence in trying to get it.

The elephant seemed to be thinking deeply for a time. Then he lay down flat on his side, and with a mighty puff, blew as hard as he could on the ground towards the threepenny-

piece. The force of the wind drove the coin violently against the opposite wall, from which it rebounded far enough to come within the elephant's reach. Then he took it up and gave it to his master.

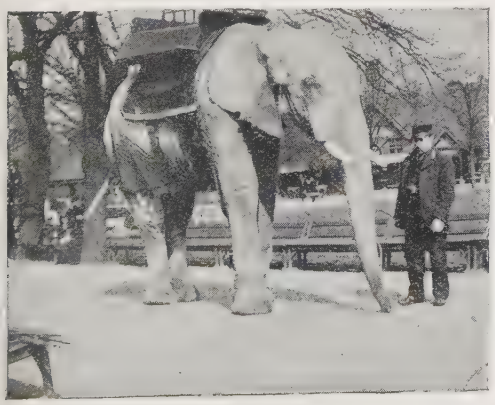
Second on the poll came the sea-lions. "Half-past four is the time." So I heard several little ones telling their mothers, and so my own children informed me. Time for what? For seeing intelligence and fun in these creatures such as would do credit to many human beings. Before four o'clock the big tank which holds "Nellie" and "Toby" was surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd watching them. Nellie, the oldest of the two, knew the time as well as any boy or girl there. She left the water, and sat on the edge of the tank, raising herself upon her hinder parts, the better to be able to see over the low hedge near the gate. For it is by this way that the keeper comes to feed his pets, and Nellie always knows just when to look out for him.

It was quite pathetic to watch the two, especially Nellie. One never left the post of observation for more than a second, lest the other should first catch his eye, and receive his greeting. And at last, just as half-past four struck, Nellie saw him. The great seal bobbed down from the edge of the tank, and struggled awkwardly along the path to meet the man as he opened the gate. She laid her wet head in his open hands, and looked into his eyes with that strange loving gaze of a seal.

Can't the two catch fish, eh? But Toby is the champion at that! The keeper told me that he is very proud of Toby in this matter,

MONKEY TO BOY:—"NO NONSENSE, NOW! WHERE ARE THOSE NUTS?"

for Toby is certainly a record "catcher." He was set, for my special benefit, in various positions to show his skill. He got on the well-known chair, whilst the keeper stood yards away; he shuffled up on to the platform, where the "throw" became a very fine one; he swam and did a double somersault in the pond between the time of the fish being thrown and its



"SOPHY," THE MONSTER ELEPHANT, AT PLAY.

Her favourite pastime is to pick up threepenny-pieces with her trunk and hand them to her keeper.

THE SAME "SOPHY" AT WORK.

"Her daily round, her common task" is to allow a glimpse of the world to juvenile visitors from the proud altitude of her back.

reaching the water. He never failed to catch the fish! Twenty attempts of one sort or another were counted, and twenty times Toby was successful!

As a favourite of the children, perhaps Bob, the old Bactrian camel, comes next. But "Old Bob," as his master calls him, lacks intelligence and fun. "Nothing you can do," said his driver to me, "will ever make a camel show the least sense or intelligence beyond his daily duty. 'Bob' has been here sixteen years out of the twenty of his life, but his pace and general demeanour have not varied one bit. He is getting old, now, for a camel, though he carries the children and older folks without grumbling."

Amongst the bears, "Billy," the Cashmere bear, is the *doyen* of the Zoo. Billy's career has been varied and notable. He is a "military" bear, or rather, was in past days. He belonged to the 18th Hussars, and grew so tame that he used to walk about like a dog in the mess-room. But as he grew older Billy did not care to be tumbled and knocked about by the budding juvenile 18th, and once or twice he gave them a good rough and tumble *fracas* in return. So Billy was sent to the Zoo, where he became at once a favourite.

His keeper took me up to the cage where Billy regards a busy world with equanimity. No sooner did the old brown bear see him than he put out his paw to be stroked. He does that each morning at 6 a.m., the first thing when his keeper visits him, nor will Billy take any notice of anyone or anything until the keeper has stroked that paw.

"I can do anything with Billy," said the keeper. "He is so tame, so quiet, so loving. But let me show you a strange anomaly in my flock, will you?"

He took me up to the animal next the Polar's cage. Here was an immense American bear.

"Take out a bun, sir," said my companion, "and let him see it; but pretend to be going to give it to 'Sam,' the Polar bear there. Then see this creature's intelligence!"

Photo. Dixon and Sons.

"SAM" AT THE POLE.

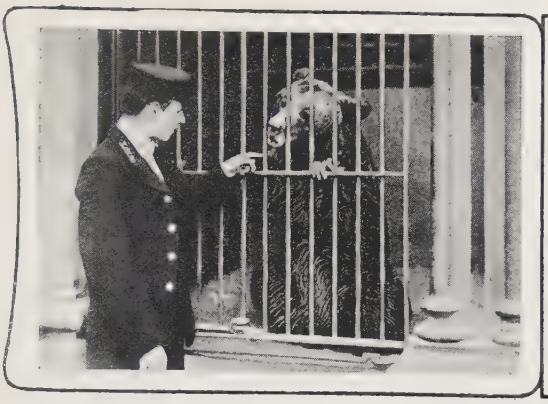
Our friend the bear looks out on the world (from the vantage point of the top of his pole), and finds it very pleasant

I did so. The American watched keenly until he saw me about to neglect him for his rival. Then he put his paw under the bottom bar of his cage, and began to rattle it regularly, making it sound just like a gong, to call my attention to himself and his wants!

It was a clever move, and I gave him a piece of bun as a reward for his smartness. Hardly had I done so before the black bear next door, on the lower side, began to knock at the wood partition with her paw to tell me she had not got any!

"They are two sisters, sir," said the keeper; "and I never came across two bears that had such sense. But they are terribly fierce—perhaps the two fiercest animals we have in the Gardens. Even I dare not take the slightest liberties with them. Yet for intelligence in several ways they could give many folks points. They themselves found out those devices of attracting attention, and they will sit up, if I tell them, like a good child or a dog, for a piece of bread or a dainty!"

The lions are particular favourites of visitors to the Gardens. But I doubt if any one animal



"BILLY," AT 6 A.M., CLAMOURS TO HAVE HIS NOSE TICKLED.

"JACK," THE HYÆNA, SMILES PLEASANTLY ON HIS KEEPER.

can be said to have a monopoly of their regard. The latest addition, "Miss Kruger," as all call her, promises to develop into a fine animal, but so far she exhibits no intelligence beyond the rest. There is the great Indian lion from Kathwar, presented by the Prince of Wales, June, 1900, said to be untameable. The most interesting is "Brutus," which arrived at the Zoo from Bostock's menagerie, after he had made himself remarkable by killing one or two keepers at different times.

"MISS KRUGER," THE LIONESS, SITS FOR "THE GIRL'S REALM."

"MISS KRUGER" GENIALLY ALLOWS HER KEEPER TO STROKE HER.

Two magnificent tigers that came to the Zoo last year as a present from the Maharani of Mysore, are perhaps the biggest tigers ever seen in captivity. There is "Old Stripes," always restlessly marching up and down. A magnificent creature, that seems panting for the desert.

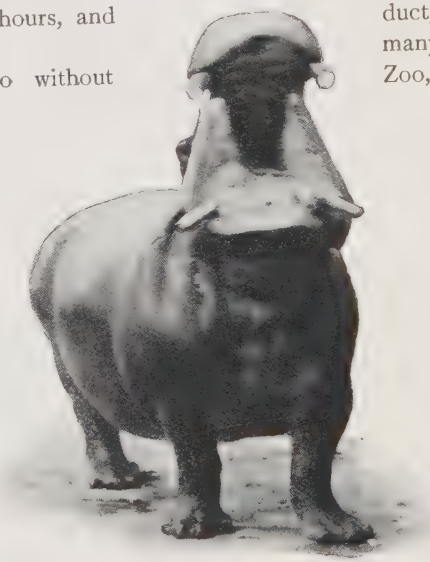
The lions are more intelligent, more friendly with those they know, than are the tigers. And lions have good memories. Some years ago at the Zoo one of these lions saw a sailor in the crowd at the lion-house. It roared and leapt about as if demented at the sight of the man. When the sailor approached its cage, the beast jumped at the bars as if it would break them

"NELLIE," THE SEAL, WONDERS WHENEVER TEA IS COMING.

down. No one could tell why. But when the keeper came along, alarmed at the noise, and saw its excitement, he ventured the remark that perhaps the lion had met the sailor elsewhere, and remembered him. Then the Jack Tar bethought himself that some years before he had had charge of a young lion on board ship as they came to England, and that it had been his special pet.

He went close up to the bars, and the lion put out its paws for him to stroke, and placed its head close against the bars for him to pet. And if ever an animal was delighted again at seeing its former master, that lion was. When, at last the sailor had to leave it, the lion was disconsolate for hours, and would scarcely eat at all.

Nobody visits the Zoo without going to see the rhinoceri and their friends the hippopotami. The rhinoceros and hippopotamus are not noted for intelligence. They know their keepers, and are amenable to them, but that is about as far as they go.



"HOW LONG THE DAY!" THE HIPPOPOTAMUS YAWNS.

The keeper of the hippos told me that either would kill an outsider who entered their enclosure, so savage are they towards strangers. In order to show me fully what a mouth a hippopotamus has when it is at full stretch, he went to the large hippo., and bade it open its mouth. It obeyed without a murmur, and even allowed the keeper to take hold of its tongue and draw it out. I then learned what was news to me, that this animal can crush a man bodily between its jaws until the life has gone out of him. The big hippo. weighs three tons, and measures fourteen feet in girth.

Of course everybody used to visit the two giraffes, "Daisy" and "Skylark." I say "used to visit," for, alas, since I was there, "Skylark" has died! Daisy is an old friend, but Skylark only arrived last year, and had a crick in his neck, caused probably by the lasso with which he was captured. Daisy is a deceiver in many ways, so her master tells me. She will put down her long neck to you when you go to her house, in order to get food. But she is not so gentle as she looks, for even the keeper dare not go nearer to her than three feet, or out goes her long leg, and he gets a bad kick. You have doubtless heard about that little joke of Daisy's, when one day she reached down her long neck to the bonnet of a lady visitor, and grabbed at the artificial flowers there? Very unladylike conduct, but then Daisy, who was for many years the only giraffe at the Zoo, has always been spoilt.

Skylark, on the other hand, was as tame and as good as possible; he allowed the keeper to play with him, and they sometimes indulged in a race, wherein Skylark's long legs usually got the victory.

Two more favourites we must mention—the monkeys, and "Jack," the laughing hyæna. Jack is a treat. To hear him laugh when his keeper, after giving him a piece of meat, says, "Jack, bring that here again!" is enough to make you laugh yourself. Jack runs about shrieking till he fairly shakes at the bare idea of a hyæna giving up anything good that he has once got. His laugh grows shriller and shriller as the man repeats the words, till at last you expect to see Jack roll on the floor in his mockery and enjoyment of the joke.

As for the monkeys, there are too many of them to treat each singly, but their quaint antics never allow one a moment's dulness in the monkey-house. Every game that a monkey can play at is played there all day long. No one monkey is a special favourite, not even "Oom Paul," the orang-outang, or "Micky,"

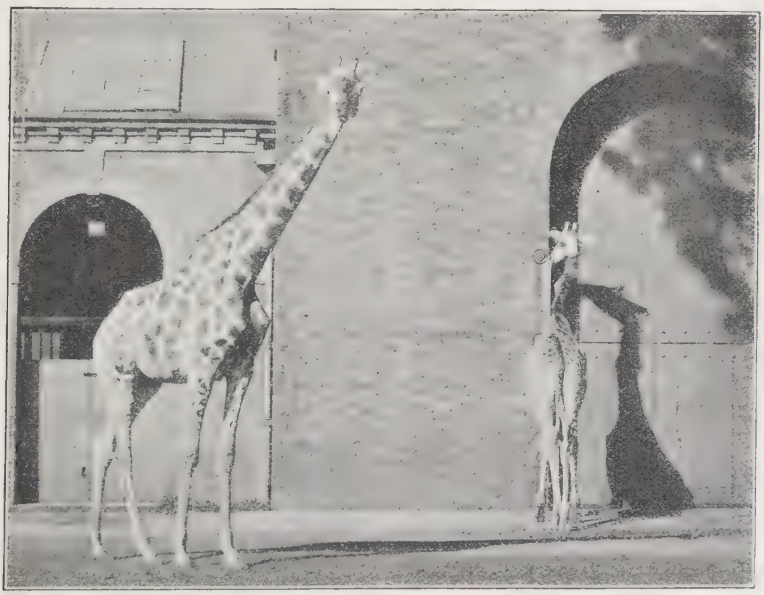
the chimpanzee, for all of them are as playful as can be, and there is equality in the record for nut-eating.

I wish I could dwell on the birds at the Zoo. The noise in the parrot-house is almost deafening; but how gorgeous is the appearance of these winged creatures—parrots, cockatoos, macaws. Here is a blue macaw with a formidable beak, which enables it to split a tough Brazil nut with the greatest ease. He and two of his mates seem to be the most strident of the screamers until we reach the white Triton cockatoo, from New Guinea, who sets up screech after screech at our approach. It has a rival in the white-crested toucan, who makes a noise like the bark of a watch-dog. The blue and crimson macaw is amiability itself, when the sun is shining, and he is allowed outside. Then he breaks forth into speech, and amuses the spectators by such remarks as "What's the time?" "Buck up!" and other general phrases.

Next to the penguin there is no bird more amusing than the great bustard when he goes a-courting. He preens his feathers, and adopts a series of grotesque attitudes. The breast is thrust forward until it becomes quite circular in shape, and the head and neck are bent back. The hair that forms the whiskers stands upright, and the wings opened out, with white feathers puffed and extended, nearly cover the head, on which a crest has risen, with their tips. If the bird looks ridiculous with his air

"OLD BOB," THE BACTRIAN CAMEL, ON DUTY.

of immense pride and conceit, it must be admitted that he looks very handsome, for the warm, sienna-like tints of the breast contrasting with the pure white of the under-feathers, produce a very fine effect.



"DAISY," THE BIG GIRL-GIRAFFE, STANDS FOR HER PICTURE, AFTER HAVING CAREFULLY BANISHED LITTLE "SKYLARK" INTO THE BACKGROUND.

HOW TWO GIRLS DID THE WORK OF THE HEAD GARDENER.

By ONE OF THEM.

PART II.

MARCH is the time for making new asparagus beds. In a fairly light soil asparagus is so easily grown that it is a good plan, where much is wanted for forcing, to sow a small bed every year. Do not sow too thickly, or you will have trouble in thinning out the plants—a process most necessary—as asparagus requires a great deal of room. The third year after sowing the plants will be ready to force, or for making new beds. For the latter I strongly recommend the French system, described in Robinson's book on vegetables, which I have tried myself with great success. Double trenching and well manuring the ground during the preceding winter is all the preparation necessary in a light soil. Then, four feet apart each way, dig holes about two feet square and one foot in depth; at the bottom make a small mound of earth and rotted manure, well mixed, and on this sit the asparagus plant, which, if well grown in plenty of room, ought to have strong roots spreading out all round it like a thick mat. These you spread out down the sides of the mound, and fill the hole in with earth. The operation is a very simple one when one thinks of the fuss made and money expended over new asparagus beds in old days. Asparagus grows best by the sea, and worst in heavy, wet soils; but even then it is perfectly successful if a little trouble is taken in putting in some crocks and rubble underneath the bed as drainage. All beds should have a dressing of salt early in the spring.

There was much to be done during March and April, perhaps the busiest months of the year, with the continual sowing and pricking out. Mignonette, of which one cannot have too much, we sowed in borders in the kitchen garden as well as in the beds in the flower garden; and sweet peas in plenty, choosing for them rather a moist bit of ground, and sowing them in a trench in the manner I described. In this way they were a grand success, and as we were constantly gathering them in summer, and never allowing them to seed, they continued flowering right into the autumn.

By the middle of May we were ready for bedding out. The designs for the carpet beds had long since been planned and drawn up, and we set to work to break our backs in carrying them out. The whole mornings were devoted to it, and when particularly anxious to finish a bed in full view of the carriage-drive we risked working at it one afternoon, and for our pains were surprised by a party of callers, whose expressions as they surveyed our muddy hands and generally untidy appearance, were decidedly funny.

Personally, I particularly dislike any form of bedding out, unless it is the simple beds of the best kinds of annuals. There are many people

*** *Part I. of this article appeared in our March issue.*

who think it suits some styles of architecture, but for my part, I consider there is a place for everything, and though I immensely admire a carpet of good design in the house, I have no desire to imitate it in the garden. By working hard we had finished all our beds in a week's time, and it only remained to go round the herbaceous borders and fill in any vacant places with the plants we had to dispose of. Old geraniums, well cut back in early spring, answer capitally for this, and are often much more satisfactory in flowering than cuttings; and calceolarias make good spots of colour here and there, though some of them are terribly glaring in a mass.

We were determined to have really good chrysanthemums for house decoration in late autumn. A lot of young plants of the best kinds had been struck, and were coming on well. Everything depended on how they were tended in the hot weather. We gave injunctions as to the watering, and one of us generally saw that it was properly done. We were absolutely ignorant of any of the scientific ways of growing chrysanthemums, but by the help of "Gardening," and knowing exactly what we wanted, we arrived at very satisfactory results, and in November the house was gay with strong, bushy plants, covered with flowers, which, though of moderate size, were, we considered, a great improvement on the coarse, soup-plate blooms generally seen.

The roses were rather disappointing. Cold east winds in spring had brought out a plague of aphis, and though we syringed the bushes with soft soap and water, much damage was done; the bloom was later than usual, the foliage poor, and a fortnight's drought early in June did not improve matters. Thorough waterings were necessary, and mulching with rotted manure or cut grass to keep in the moisture. The grass answers very well, except in extremely dry spots, where it is liable to harbour earwigs—horrid pests in a garden—which love to feed on the tender shoots of many plants.

In July came the time for layering carnations. They did very well in our soil, many kinds growing into shrubby, hard-wooded plants, which lasted for some years, and flowered splendidly. There were few different sorts in those days compared to the endless variety now grown, and a great number of our plants were the old crimson clove and the white clove. Layering is a neat operation requiring a little skill. Hitherto we had only practised it in a rough-and-ready way, with scant success, in our own small plots of garden. So, after studying instructions in our paper, we thought it as well to take a few lessons from our intelligent under-gardener, who soon put us in the way of it. A little freshly-prepared soil sprinkled under the plant is necessary, into which the joint is firmly pegged down, after being half cut through in a sloping upward direction. By the middle of September the layers should be rooted, and can then be moved to some sheltered spot for the winter.

While the gardeners were planting out all sorts of greens, cabbages, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, for winter use, and getting the celery into the trenches already prepared, we were busy potting strawberry runners for forcing, and there were different things to be potted, also, for winter flowering under glass—a nice, cool occupation for the hot summer days.

Up to now every month seemed as full as the last, with never a moment to spare; but with August came some days of leisure, when, except for our usual superintendence of the stove and greenhouse, there was nothing very pressing to be done. The bulb catalogues had arrived, and we were intent on marking what would be required. It is a great thing to order all bulbs early, as they are best planted by September. By that time some sweet peas ought also to be in the ground. They flower much earlier the following summer if autumn sown, and make also much finer blooms, and are then succeeded by those sown in spring. By the middle of October we had begun to use our last row of green peas. They had been a great success all through the hottest weather, never failing us, and visitors often expressed surprise at our having young peas so late.

Through October we were sowing successive small patches of mustard and cress in front of the fruit trees in the orchard-house; endive and lettuces had been transplanted into odd corners and old frames, to give them a little shelter, The asparagus plants were cut down and well dressed for the winter, and there remained little

to be done out of doors. With November came the first serious frosts. The garden we had taken such a pride in looked shrivelled and neglected, the dahlias were a sad sight, with their hanging heads, and many plants in the borders presented a most dishevelled appearance. So we busied ourselves taking out all the tender things, tidying up the borders, and storing the dahlia roots in a dry, frost-proof place for the winter. Some of the bushiest of the lobelias which had escaped injury we put into small pots; they continued blooming in the greenhouse for weeks, and were charming plants in the house, hanging over the sides of the pot in a profusion of blue flowers.

During December frosts we were chiefly in the greenhouse, looking over the plants for marauding insects, and arranging that there should be always a supply of flowers for the house. The palms were looking well, and the extra heat in the stove-house enabled us to bring on lilies-of-the-valley, and several choice things for indoor decoration. So even in the depth of winter there was always something to be done, besides the amusement of making plans for the future, and discussing the many ventures we meant to embark on the following season.

"GIRL'S REALM" NEEDLEWORK DESIGNS.—I.

With the spring all but on us now, naturally our thoughts fly to the very pleasing question, "What will be worn?" Let me tell you that the blouse coat and skirt will still hold its own; and very charming it is, specially when worn with a pretty vest—such as is shown in this design.

For those that are deft with the needle, and there are many who do add very considerably to the adornment of their wardrobe by their clever stitchery, this should be very easy to work.

There are two ways in which to do the work. The first is to trace the design on plain cream satin, and with pale pink silk work each tiny rose in satin-stitch, treating the leaves in the same manner, only in yellow green silk. All the stalks and outlines to the flowers, which should be worked in stem-stitch, should be outlined in "black," finishing each rose with a spangle and tiny gold beads.

The other way, and the one that is indicated in the sketch, is to appliqué all the roses and leaves in pale shades of panne, and stitch down gold thread as outline to the entire design.

If you find any difficulty in tracing the design yourself, Mr. Philip Ainsworth, who originated the pattern for this magazine, will do so at a very small cost. His address is 4, Campden House Terrace, Kensington, W.

This is the first of a number of Original Designs that will appear in "The Girl's Realm."

What Girls are Doing.

GERALDINE FARRAR.

The young American girl of 21, who has appeared with such striking success at the Royal Opera House, Berlin.

Amy Castles.

WITHIN many years no such extraordinary interest has been shown in the *début* of a young artist than that which has been evinced towards a new star in the song firmament — Miss Amy Castles. It is only a matter of three years since Miss Castles, at the age of sixteen—and away at the back of the world, in Australia, first began to shine out in that particular star-like manner which spells success all the world over. Naturally she had a lovely voice, and though she constantly studied, she also seems to have possessed some natural abilities in regard to method and voice production—enough to make public singing come easily to her at the very difficult age of sixteen. After her first appearance, singing in public became to her a royal progress of applause and acclamation. She continued her successes in Australia until, in Melbourne, 16,000 people crowded into the great Exhibition hall to hear her sing. They stood, when no more seats were to be had, waited patiently in their thousands, all in order to hear a voice which, at that time, had no pretensions towards any superb or even particular training; which was merely a voice which sang, but sang with such freshness and sweetness as to be quite unique. At one of her concerts in Australia, Miss Amy Castles had the good fortune to be heard by Lady Brassey, whose kind interest in the young singer brought her name very prominently before the English public. For two years she studied very diligently in Paris, and finally appeared in London in November of 1901. Besides the fortune of her introduction and the reputation of her successful appearances in Australia, Miss Castles comes of a country which has had a way of late of sending us very wonderful voices, and the London public was curious accordingly. Pleased too, as results proved in later days. Miss Castles is pretty, small in stature, with, as befits a girl who is half Irish, half Australian, grey eyes and brown hair. She is young and merry, and her youth and merriness creep into the fresh notes of her voice, though she is so capable at other times of very different expression. Her charm lies more in her bright freshness and purity of voice than in any elaborate or pronounced method of producing it. She has already bid farewell to London for the season, and by this time is on her way again to Australia, where a tour has been mapped out for her, which is quite unprecedented in the history of any girl of nineteen. In this tour she is to give twenty-five concerts, for which she will receive £5,000. Probably no girl of her age ever received £250 for each concert at which she

CONNIE ADNAMS.

Who was awarded a Seven Guinea Camera as a First Prize in the recent "Brownie" Kodak Competition. The dog taken with her is the same whose portrait gained her the prize.

ETHEL WILSON.

Who has greatly distinguished herself at the Royal College of Music as a violinist and pianist. During her stay at the R. C. M. Ethel Wilson has gained three pianos as prizes.

appeared. Miss Amy Castles' lucky star has indeed shone out very early and with quite unusual brilliance, in comparison to other people's particular stars. While she keeps her purity of voice and her bright enthusiasm, an added brilliancy may always be predicted for Miss Amy Castles.

Miss Ethel Wilson, pianist and violinist, is a young artist who, though just on the threshold of her professional career, possesses a wonderful record of successes as a student. When quite a young girl she took her diplomas of A.R.C.M. and L.R.A.M., both in pianoforte and violin playing. This placed her in an altogether unique position, no student ever having been fortunate enough to take these diplomas in dual subjects. In recent years Miss Wilson has studied entirely at the Royal College of Music, under Mr. Edward Dannreuther, Signor Arbos, and for singing, Mr. Daniel Price. She has been successful in winning four Council Exhibitions and the Brinsmead pianoforte, which is competed for every three years in the College. Throughout her years of training Miss Wilson has been clever enough to win three pianos as prizes—surely an unprecedented record. In the Christmas term of 1901 she was successful in winning the Dove prize for brilliancy and excellence in pianoforte playing. At the opening of the beautiful new hall in the Royal College of Music Miss Wilson specially distinguished herself by her admirable performance of the two last movements of Tschaikovsky's pianoforte Concerto in G flat minor. She plays piano with something more than the intelligence of a very clever student—with a sympathetic sense of tone and rhythm, which places her performances on a very high level indeed. Miss Wilson has already appeared many times in public—at the Queen's Hall and elsewhere; and has established her claims towards being a very capable teacher. She is thoroughly talented, has worked very hard under the best masters, and has been so very successful in every respect as a student that we can only predict greater success in the good wishes which go to her at the beginning of her professional career.

Ethel Wilson.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

AMY CASTLES.

The talented young artist who recently charmed London by her singing. Amy Castles, who is only 19, is receiving £250 for each concert at which she appears in Australia.

A young American girl of twenty-one has recently appeared at the Royal Opera, in Berlin, with such success as to make her name already famous in a town where fame in musical matters is not easily to be gained. Miss Geraldine Farrar is a native of Melrose, Massachusetts. Her parents, who are very musical, discovered a voice worth cultivating in their little daughter, and since she was twelve years of age have given her the best advantages of first-rate training. From her early years in America, Miss Farrar went to Paris, where she studied diligently. Later circumstances led her to Berlin, where she became the pupil of Signor Graziani, to whom she ascribes the proper development of her talent and her voice. Count von Hochberg, of the Royal Opera, having happened to hear her sing at a private musical party, invited her to sing at the Opera with the orchestra. On the strength of her delightful performance, he offered her then and there a three years' engagement at the Royal Opera House, where she has since appeared with splendid success. Her principal rôle so far has been Marguerite in "Faust," later she is to appear as Juliette, and in March she will sing as Elsa in "Lohengrin." Although Miss Farrar has been made much of on account of her beautiful voice and her pretty and dainty personality she prefers artistic to social successes, and lives very quietly with her parents in Berlin. She is passionately fond of all outdoor sports, and only regrets that in the interests of her voice the practice of some of these is so rigorously forbidden.

Geraldine Farrar.

Some Clever Girl Ping-Pongists.

BEATRICE SMITH. ZÉNIE WEISLEY. GLADYS TAYLOR. C. M. WILSON. R. G. BLAKELOCK.

Who all won prizes in the recent Queen's Hall Tournament.

Connie Adnams.

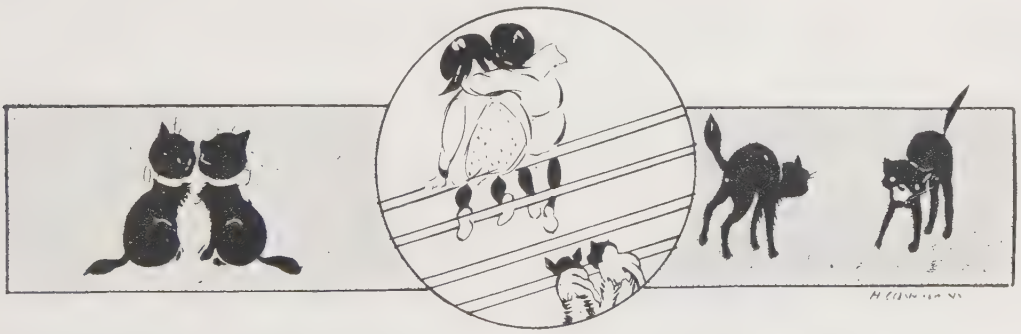
The Kodak Company toward the end of the summer of 1901 offered twenty-five prizes of kodaks, ranging in value from one to seven guineas, for the best results in a "Brownie" Kodak Competition open to all competitors under the age of sixteen. A "Brownie" Kodak costs the small sum of five shillings, and the results which it can produce are not only satisfying but wonderful. It was, therefore, not very strange that boys and girls all up and down the country competed in such numbers, and with such success, that the Kodak Company gave eleven more prizes than the original twenty-five which had been announced. A girl was successful in winning the first prize, a seven guinea kodak, for a photograph taken, developed, and printed by herself. Along with the accompanying photograph of herself, Connie Adnams, the winner, sends me the following particulars:—

"The little dog taken with me is the same whose portrait gained me the prize. She is a great pet, and accompanied me on all my photographic expeditions during the summer holidays, when I took the negatives, prints from which I sent into the competition. It may interest you to know that the reason why I first took up photography was that I had been very successful at school during the summer term and gained many prizes, pleasing my father so that he gave me my "Brownie" as an additional prize for working hard at my lessons. I develop all my own negatives, and print them myself, thus getting a great deal of amusement during the long winter evenings from my hobby. Of course, my fingers are often rather brown, but that does not matter. I am indeed very proud of my new camera, but have not had much time yet to try it."

If she is as successful with it as she has been with her "Brownie," some good results may be expected from Connie Adnams' first prize.

Le Prêt d'Honneur

Girl students in Paris are emulating the spirit of the members of THE GIRL'S REALM Guild, in the "passing-on" of benefits by the fortunate to the less fortunate. A meeting of associated girl students was held recently in the hall of Les Sociétés Savantes near the Sorbonne and the School of Medicine. At this meeting the students resolved to adopt among themselves the system of *le prêt d'honneur*, the loan of honour. By this system the poorer lady students, who are attending lectures on law, medicine, and letters, will be financially assisted by those of their sisterly colleagues who are better off than themselves. So that in these particular classes in Paris there will be no hard handicap of ill-fortune for the girls who cannot of themselves afford the full training they would desire. It is said, indeed, that some very clever and remarkably talented girls will be helped in this way. To a girl no help comes so very welcome as the help that comes from other girls. A system of the *prêt d'honneur* inaugurated on general lines at our universities has still to be considered by the girls of Great Britain. But probably when we hear of the certain success which is bound to follow the Paris adoption of this excellent and kindly system, our own inauguration will not be so very far off.



Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY'S NEW SERIAL STORY.

The Author of "Rhoda" has produced a beautiful and powerful work, called

"THE DAUGHTERS OF A GENIUS."

The delightful story by Mrs. De Horne Vaizey, the author of "Rhoda," will begin in the next number of THE GIRL'S REALM. It is a tale of to-day; one that could not relate to any other epoch, and it is essentially girlish. It tells, with much liveliness and the tenderest sympathy, of the difficulties and the enjoyment attending the efforts of a family of girls—left without father or mother, and with only a small legacy—to win their way to the position to which their varied talents entitle them. The story, which is called "The Daughters of a Genius," is enlivened by many scenes of humour and adventure. The characters, including the two interesting brothers, are varied, they are strongly contrasted and clearly drawn. The story is worthy of the pen that gave us "Rhoda." The illustrations will, we think, add greatly to the enjoyment of the story.

The Children's Own Corner.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR LITTLE PEOPLE,—

I must thank you for all your charming letters, for the drawings you have sent me, and the stories. I shall write about these later, but I begin by answering your letters. Here is one from a little girl called ERIKA HOHENLOHE.

"DEAR EDITOR,

"I should like to tell you a little about our home in Hungary, where my sister and I live. We have a castle in the wilds of Hungary, and the country round gives very good shooting, a sport of which my Mamma is very fond. She shot over five hundred head of game in three days a few weeks ago. We have a large park, and we ride our bicycles in it; we also have a lovely little donkey which we sometimes ride or drive, but in the summer I am going to ride a pony. We have a playground to ourselves in one part of the park with all our pets round it. We have deer, goats, rabbits, doves, and some pigeons. Our gardens are also there, and swings, sand heaps, etc. We have a great many dogs and are very fond of them; there are thirty in all, and twenty-six of them are collies.

"The peasants are 'Slovacs' who live here, and they are really very funny. Their dress is so strange; the men and women wear boots to their knees, and the women's skirts come only to their boot tops, and stand out all round them. They are very fond of colour, and often have a dozen different ones on at the same time. The men and women wear blouses alike in the summer, and there is three yards of linen in each sleeve. Their language is 'Slavish,' of which we understand only a few words, but the other people who live here speak German. We speak English and German, and are learning French now. We stay here for seven months in the year, and usually go to Monte Carlo for three months after Christmas, and in the autumn to Germany.

"I like your Magazine very much, and look forward to it every month.

"Yours truly, ERIKA HOHENLOHE."

Is not this a charming letter? Do you not seem to see all the funny-looking peasants with their big boots, their short skirts and sleeves all puffed out like balloons, and to hear the curious language they speak? The little girls play in such a lovely garden with strange animals about them, deer and goats, rabbits and pigeons just as if they were princesses in a fairy tale.

THE ELUSIVE CELLULOID.

THE PING-PONG BALL: "Hurrah! I am lost again! Let them find me if they can!"

From a Drawing by Dorothea Morse, one of our readers.

Now comes a letter from a dog whose name is "Prince." This is what he says:—

"I am a whippet hound and I live in Norwich. My Missus has a little kitten and its name is Muff Tigrina. It is a pretty little thing. My tail! what teeth and what claws it has. I wonder why they feel so sharp on one's nose? How they spoil that cat! She has a Ping-Pong ball to play with whenever she likes, while I am not even allowed to pick up the balls when they play. I have one comfort, the cat is not allowed in the dining-room because she scratches the furniture.

"My Missus has a tortoise, a lovely thing to carry in my mouth when I run round the lawn. But someone is sure to see me, and they take it away and say 'Naughty dog' to me.

"I must stop now, but if I see my letter in print I shall write again,

"With love from PRINCE.

"P. S.—Can you tell me the latest fashions in collars?

"PRINCE."

The important question of the collar I have referred to my little dog "Nelly." She is a whippet-hound also, and has a fine taste in collars. She says, "I like collars with bells all round. Grown-up people say that they are deafened by the sound, but I don't mind. I like to hear the jingle, jingle of the bells as I run along."

Then here is a letter from MARGARET HODGSON, who tells me that she went to see the procession of the King and Queen going in state to open Parliament. They went in their wonderful gold coach, and the Queen looked like a fairy queen.

"DOROTHY'S" letter comes all the way from West Australia. It is about a Bazaar for The Ministering Children's League. It was held in the Queen's Hall, and Lady Lawley, the Governor's wife, opened it. "I was helping at a threepenny bran pie dip and we asked Lady Lawley if she would try something, and she had two dips as she said she wanted toys for a Christmas tree." DOROTHY took about £3. "There were entertainments in the evening," she tells me, "tableaux vivants, and duets and pianoforte and singing." I am glad "Dorothy" had such a brilliant time. I am sure that when she is working for The Ministering Children's League she is fulfilling the aim of our Guild, which tries to bring sweetness and cheer wherever it goes.

BARBARA BURKE sends me first 8s. for the Cot and then 5s. more. She gives an account of her birthday, when "we danced into the morning. My papa gave me a birthday present of money and I hope to send you some of it soon." She also tells me of her Magazine, "which is getting on splendidly, and my father has been so kind as to have it printed. I sell copies (in aid of the Cot Fund) for 4d. post free, so if any of the members or associates want to have it I will send them one." Barbara's address is 41, Bramham Gardens, South Kensington, S.W.

Good-bye, my dear little people,

Your loving friend,

THE EDITOR.

Chat with the . . . Girl of the Period.

By THE EDITOR.

My Dear Girls,—My little essay on friendship in a recent number seems to have attracted a good deal of attention. I have had many charming letters about it.

One idea runs through your letters—a desire that girls should be themselves, and should learn to develop on their own lines. The letters show, unconsciously sometimes on the part of the writer, the difficulty of that desire, and what a really fine art the art of being one's self is. For really in this, as in everything else in life, you have at once to be the thing and to guard against its excesses, that is, in a measure, to be something else at the same time. Yet without guarding against it there can be but a lopsided development, and one is in danger of becoming something not much more interesting than a monster gooseberry. There is a fine passage somewhere in Goethe on the difficulty of knowing how to combine together prudence and nobleness of mind; and again of loving on system, that is to say of loving wisely and sensibly, and yet still retaining the generous and wild desires of youth. Indeed that seems to be the difficulty in one form or other of all the correspondents to whose letters I shall refer.

"Vodka" has some true words on the folly of attempting to compare the two incomparables, man and woman, at least for superiority. She has evidently in her mind a fine saying of Tennyson in the "Princess," "Woman is not undevelopt man, but diverse," and that saying goes to the root of the matter. Yet I think she is a little hard on the women, who, as she puts it, "are clamouring for their rights," for I do not in the least draw the conclusion that women are not to seek for every opportunity of culture that our more liberal age affords. On the contrary I think that the cultivation of the higher powers of the mind and thought is just the corrective that all of us want, and women as much as any, to correct the excesses of their own peculiar virtues. This is our problem in a nutshell. We want women to be what God has made them, loving, tender, and compassionate, representative of the merciful instinct as contrasted with the instinct of mere justice. Yet we feel that they cannot be all this with effect unless they watch the defects of their own qualities, and strengthen their minds by a wider knowledge of thought and life. These are the true lines of the higher education for them, and they are not to be frightened away from it because some of them are making indiscreet claims to the poor honours of wig and gown, and other pursuits in which they might become the active competitors of men for mere competition's sake. It is easy enough to say, and therefore it is hardly necessary to say, more especially as a woman herself has said it long ago, that sensibility must also have sense for its tempering force. There comes in the need to study what you are not, in order that you may more effectually be what you are.

"Gwendolen," one of my correspondents, very aptly reminds girls that some of them might "imitate the self-denial of their brothers. I know so many boys here who have had to give up promising University careers and go into banks and offices because it was better for their families that they should be immediately self-supporting. Are girls less able to make a sacrifice for those that they love?" So once more the girl, fired with the noble ambition of culture, might still find it needful to watch that ambition against its excess, and to guard against the selfishness that it might bring in its train. It would be a poor thing to have all the culture in the world and still to lack the power of saying no to our dearest hopes. Indeed, to have that power would be to attain success with the best results.

Only one of my correspondents to whom I give no such warning is "Petronella." She writes very sensibly on the excesses and sometimes the folly of girl friendships. It is a warning I have frequently uttered, but it cannot be too frequently repeated. Here, no doubt, in the ardour with which girls throw themselves, metaphorically and otherwise, into each other's arms, we have the danger of their seeking for something too bright and good for human nature's daily food. The reaction is almost inevitable, and Petronella gives us an amusing instance of it, in what she says as to the pairing at the beginning of the term in a girl's school, and the very

different pairing at the end of it. Here comes in the culture, by that I mean the cultivation of the quality which is the opposite to one's very own, the quality in this case being self-control and reasonableness, and everything that may act as a check on too much emotion. The most lasting friendships between men and women are those in which these restraining qualities are shown, in which you do not seek for a paragon in your mate, but recognise her weaknesses and failings, and love her still in spite of all.

Conduct problems continue to come in. Some are written in great perplexity, and such is the one sent me by "MIDGE," from whose letter I quote the following extract:—

I will put letters instead of names. A goes to a large public school, and, though in the upper school, is the youngest there. Two or three girls, say B, C, D, cheat during lessons and examinations. A knows of it, but B, C, and D have hitherto been her friends, and she does not like to report them to her form mistress, and even if she did is not sure the form mistress would stop it, as B, C, and D are favourites and A is not. When B, C, and D come up to speak to her ought she to say she will not speak to a cheat, or ought she to go on her own way without taking any notice of them?

This is a very serious charge to bring against the form mistress. Is "MIDGE" very sure of her facts? Is she quite sure that she does not allow some bitterness to enter into her judgment of the lady who is at the head of the form? I would be loth to believe that in a great public school there should be any such laxity allowed to exist. "MIDGE" cannot afford to overlook the cheating of B, C, and D. It is not fair to the rest of the class to do so. The difficulty will not be met by her simply saying "I will not speak to a cheat." She ought to tell the culprits what she has observed, give chapter and verse for what she says. She should speak to each separately and entreat them to give up the terrible habit, plead earnestly with them, then if they will go on, separate herself from them. I should not tell the form mistress. "MIDGE" has done the right thing when she has told the culprits earnestly and distinctly that she knows of their wrong practice, and seeing that they do not mind her to, as it were, shake off the dust from her feet of all intercourse with them. Hers is a painful position, but it must be faced, and having faced it, I would no longer trouble about the offenders.

This problem has been sent to me by a girl who does not wish her name given:

Suppose A to be a girl at a large school. She is accused of some very dishonourable act, of which, however, she is quite innocent. She also knows the real culprit to be B, a very poor girl, and holds in her hands certain proofs of her own innocence and B's guilt. If she brings these proofs forward, and so throws the disgrace on B, the latter's prospects in life will be altogether ruined. A has a friend who is deeply attached to her, but is now lying dangerously ill, between life and death. If A shields B, and allows herself to appear as the culprit, the shock will certainly prove injurious to the friend.

Ought A, therefore, to denounce B, and so perhaps save her friend's life, or to remain silent and shield B from lifelong disgrace?

Let A make every attempt to make B denounce herself. Failing that, let her remember that apart from the question of her friend's health she owes the discovery of the truth to herself. Her first duty in such a case is towards the innocent person, and that duty is not to be in the least weakened in its force by the consideration that the innocent person happens to be herself. The personal question may fairly be left out of it. She would not hesitate to denounce B if the person to be saved were a third party accused of an offence of which the real culprit knew her to be innocent. Why should she hesitate because herself and the accused happen to be one and the same person? If the personal question must come in let her remember her duty to others as well as to the sick friend. A's whole family might be made desolate by her disgrace. If she laid all these considerations before the culprit they could hardly fail to have their own weight. If they do not, A should lay the matter before some friend of mature age of both parties for final arbitrament.

In almost all these school problems there is an absence of the feeling that the action done is the matter to be looked to, but the discovery is all that is to be feared. After all, the sin that has been committed is the one great fact, the finding out is of little importance.

One of my girls asks me to point out to her what book she ought to read for a good description of Port Royal. Saint Beuve's "Port Royal" is the classic work on the subject, and is in many volumes. There she will find the description of the various characters beautifully wrought out, of Madame Angélique, of Jacqueline Pascal, of the great ladies from the Court of Louis Quatorze, who came for rest and meditation there. She will find about Fénélon and Bossuet, and all those that took a share in the great storm that passed over the convent school, and which ultimately destroyed it. Victor Cousin has also written about it. His "Life of Jacqueline Pascal," the sister of the famous thinker, who died of having signed her name to the recantation of the doctrines on which Port Royal was founded, is one that every girl who knows French should read. He wrote also about Madame de Longueville, Madame de Sablé, about the Mère Arnauld. They and all the others live before us, but they are separate studies. To understand the place, and to understand what were essentially its doctrines, you should read Saint Beuve's "Port Royal." In English there is a very interesting article on the place by Stevens. There is no more fascinating study than that of the convent and of the great characters that found rest and refreshment within its walls. It is still existing, but it is a ruin. There is a little churchyard where the nuns were buried. There is the holy well from which they, the sick, and infirm used to drink in times of trouble with faith in its healing properties. There, too, the *grandes dames* of the Court of Louis Quatorze, the nuns, and the little scholars used to pray.

Good bye, my dear girls,

Your affectionate friend,

THE EDITOR.

SCENES IN ELFLAND—II.

From an Original Drawing by SYBIL C. BURNSIDE.

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE SIXTH.

MILES STANDISH.

"Thus, with a jest and a laugh,
The skein on his arms she adjusted,
He sitting awkwardly there,
With his arms extended before him.'

—*See Editor's note on page* 593.

THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF THE GERMAN ROYAL HOUSE

THE EMPRESS

PRINCESS LUISCHEN.

THE EMPEROR.

THE PRINCESS VICTORIA LOUISE OF PRUSSIA.

By MINKA VON DRACHENFELS.

In Germany there is an ancient prophecy which says that "In one year three Kaisers shall reign and the youngest of the three will have seven sons and bring about the ruin of the Fatherland." In 1888 this prophecy was partially fulfilled, for, in that year—within six months—three Kaisers reigned in Germany: Wilhelm I., who died on the 3rd of March, 1888, and was succeeded by his son, the late Kaiser Frederick, who, ascending the throne a dying man, only lived for a little more than three months after his accession. Thus when the present Emperor came to the throne, he was the third monarch to reign within the year.

In 1888, on the 27th of July, the fifth son of Kaiser Wilhelm II. was born, Prince Oscar, who is now thirteen years of age. A little more than two years later, a sixth Prince made his appearance, who received the name of Joachim. At this time great fears were felt and expressed throughout the land of Germany by those who bore in mind the ancient prophecy, that the seventh child of the Emperor might prove the unlucky Prince, destined to bring ruin to his house and country.

But there was little need for this anxiety, for on the 13th of September, a little Princess was born—the only daughter of her parents. Since that time no seventh brother has come to bring disaster to the House of Hohenzollern, and the old prophecy bids fair to remain for ever unfulfilled.

The Princess Victoria Louise of Prussia, who, in her family circle, goes by the name of "Luischen," is the greatest delight to her parents, and an immense pet with her six brothers. Her youngest brother, Prince Joachim, has been her constant companion and playfellow since her birth, and the fact that he has always been less robust than his elder brothers has made him all the better adapted to be the companion of his younger sister, who is not quite two years younger than he is.

As the only daughter of the German Emperor, the Princess Luischen is a person of great importance, a fact that she is well aware of, her dignified little ways being the source of considerable amusement to her parents. Kaiser Wilhelm has on more than one occasion remarked: "My daughter never forgets that she is the daughter of an Emperor, but she often forgets that her father is the Emperor." The little Princess has not the slightest fear of her father, and enjoys nothing more than a romp with him.

I remember on one occasion seeing the

PRINCESS VICTORIA LOUISE AS A BABY.
In the arms of her mother, and surrounded by her six brothers.

Princess Luischen driving with her Emperor-father through the Tiergarten in Berlin. She looked the picture of content and satisfied ambition, for it was the first time that she had been allowed to drive out alone with her father, and she appeared to regard it as a very high honour indeed. Very gravely and with the utmost dignity she returned the greetings of the people in the street. When, however, she looked up at her father, she almost smiled, and then again, as though conscious of what was expected of her, composed her features into the expression she thought proper for so great an occasion.

The birthday of the Princess Luischen is looked forward to by her small Royal Highness with the greatest excitement, for on this day of days there is always a party in honour of the occasion, to which the children of the courtiers, as well as the cousins of the Princess, are duly invited. One year the birthday celebration took the form of a children's dance, the Kaiser, as a special treat, commanding the band of a crack regiment to be present to play for the little dancers. In an interval of the music a street piano was heard, whereupon Princess Luischen rushing to her father, cried eagerly, "Please, Papa—oh, please allow us to have the man with the street piano; the band makes much too great a noise for such little people as we are."

The Kaiser laughingly consented to this, and ordered that the man should be told to bring his organ upstairs. This the astonished grinder did, and it was not long before he was playing merrily for the Princess and her little guests, who, delighted with the change, danced with greater spirit than before. The itinerant musician was naturally equally delighted by the honour of playing before such a distinguished audience. Indeed he carried away with him that night, not only a handsome sum of money in his pocket, but the pleasing memory of a flushed and happy little Princess, who had thanked him personally for the nice tunes he had played.

Next to her father and mother, Princess Luischen loves her eldest brother, the German Crown Prince, who returns her devotion with equal affection. His Imperial Highness exerts a salutary influence over his somewhat wilful little sister; he by no means spoils her,

THE LITTLE PRINCESS AT THE AGE OF FIVE.
With her mother, and her brother and constant companion Prince Joachim.

PRINCESS LUISCHEN AND PRINCE JOACHIM WITH THEIR PET LAMB.

but on the contrary rebukes her publicly before her brothers and friends whenever he considers it necessary.

It is the custom with the children of the German Emperor and Empress to make a great many of the presents they give their parents, who always value the work of their children much more than anything they could buy. Princess Luischen, who at a very early age learnt to sew, used always to hem a handkerchief for her father. She can now embroider prettily, and is generally busy with some little piece of work destined for one of her parents. She is, however, most in her glory when she accompanies her mother on a shopping expedition shortly before Christmas. On these occasions she takes her own little purse with her, from which she purchases the things she thinks most suitable for those to whom she is in the habit of giving presents. On one occasion Her Royal Highness was told to buy a gift for her great-grandmother, the late Queen Victoria, for which she set out well supplied with money. On her return to the Palace the Empress inquired of her daughter what she had bought, whereupon the little Princess produced a small box containing hairpins, which had cost one mark, or what would be equivalent to a shilling in English money. The Empress, rather surprised at the smallness of the gift, asked her why she had spent so little upon the present. She was little less astonished by Princess Luischen's grave answer, which was to the effect that she had thought a long time on the matter, and had at last come to the conclusion that her great-grandmother was so rich, and had so many nice things of her own, that she (the Princess) had not thought it necessary to spend much money on a present for her.

Easter is a festival which is always greatly looked forward to by the children of the Emperor and Empress, for it is a great day in the Fatherland, and the old customs are followed at the Prussian Court. It is usual for all those who have children to have a party for the hunting of Easter eggs, the value of the eggs sought for being according to the means of the giver of the festivity. The Kaiser and Kaiserin always have an egg-hunting party for their

A PRETTY PICTURE OF PRINCESS LUISCHEN AND HER BROTHER, PRINCE JOACHIM.

THE THREE ELDER BROTHERS OF THE LITTLE PRINCESS SALUTING THEIR FATHER, THE EMPEROR.

children, in which grown-up people sometimes join. This sport is very much appreciated by Princess Luischen and Prince Joachim, as well as by their elder brothers, and they and their little cousins and friends spend the afternoon in hunting for eggs, and later have tea together, generally at the Bellevue Schloss. The late Field-Marshal Count von Moltke, who invariably made one of the party as long as he lived, showed as much eagerness in the hunt as the children.

The Royal children are not always good, for on one occasion, when a venerable clergyman had come to have a private audience with the Kaiser, he left his hat in the ante-room. He came out only to find the Crown Prince in command, who, taking it to be a crush hat similar to that of his father, had told his younger brothers to sit on it in succession. The Emperor, who had come with the clergyman in order to show him his sons, just appeared as the Crown Prince gave the word of command, and Prince Eitel Fritz sat down on the tall hat. Naturally a new hat was sent to the visitor, and the Princes were reproved. This, however, happened some time ago.

A FAMILY GROUP: PRINCESS LUISCHEN, WITH HER MOTHER, HER FATHER AND HER BROTHERS.

The young Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, who is completing his education in the Potsdam military school, is much attached to his Prussian cousins, his especial favourites being the Princess Luischen and Prince Joachim, with whom he is always delighted to spend an afternoon. Last winter His Royal Highness often skated with them, and many of his holidays were passed with them at the Potsdam New Palace.

The Princess is always delighted when she can have other children to play with her; very often the children of the Court dignitaries are invited to the Palace as well as those of the Prince and Princess Friedrich-Leopold of Prussia, which occasions are looked upon as great festivals by the Kaiser's youngest son and daughter. The Princess Friedrich-Leopold, who is a younger sister of the German Empress, has one daughter (two years older than the Princess Luischen) and three sons. The daughters of the other married sister of the Kaiserin are also often invited to stay with their aunt, who has a particular affection for her Glücksburg nieces.

The two youngest children were last summer left behind at Schloss Wilhelmshöhe, near Cassel, when the Emperor and Empress returned to Berlin after a short visit to the Castle. On one occasion, when driving in the neighbourhood of the Schloss, they passed through the village of Weimar, which had recently suffered from a most disastrous fire. The little Prince and Princess insisted on hearing all about the fire, and were most warm in their expressions of sympathy to

the poor people who had lost their homes. On the way back to the Castle they consulted together how they could best help the villagers. The idea struck them that they would write a graphic account to their father, and beg him to send assistance. On reaching home Prince Joachim and his sister wrote a long description of all that they had seen, begging the Kaiser to send help as soon as possible. By return of post came the order from His Majesty to have the matter looked into and substantial help proffered to those who had lost their homes in the disaster.

It is the Empress's custom, shortly before Christmas, to look over the toys of the Princess and Prince Joachim, and to have a number of them put into good repair, so that they may be sent to the various Children's Hospitals. This work always interests the Princess, who insists on herself picking

THE YOUNG PRINCESS IN HER FAVOURITE POSITION—ON HER FATHER'S KNEE.

PRINCESS LUISCHEN OFFERS BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO HER ELDEST BROTHER, THE CROWN PRINCE.

out her toys and suggesting which children should have them.

The Emperor and Empress have their two youngest children with them as much as possible, and they almost always accompany them on their journeys to various places. Two years ago their Majesties went to Wiesbaden for a week on their way home from Schloss Urville, in Lothringen, and took Prince Joachim and his sister with them. At the station, on leaving the train, they entered the carriage ordered for them to drive to the Royal Schloss, and, instead of letting the children follow with their attendants, to the great delight of the people, the Kaiser took Princess Luischen on his knee, and the Kaiserin Prince Joachim on hers. They were enthusiastically cheered along the whole line of route for this act of thoughtfulness, though later there were a few complaints from some of the people, who had

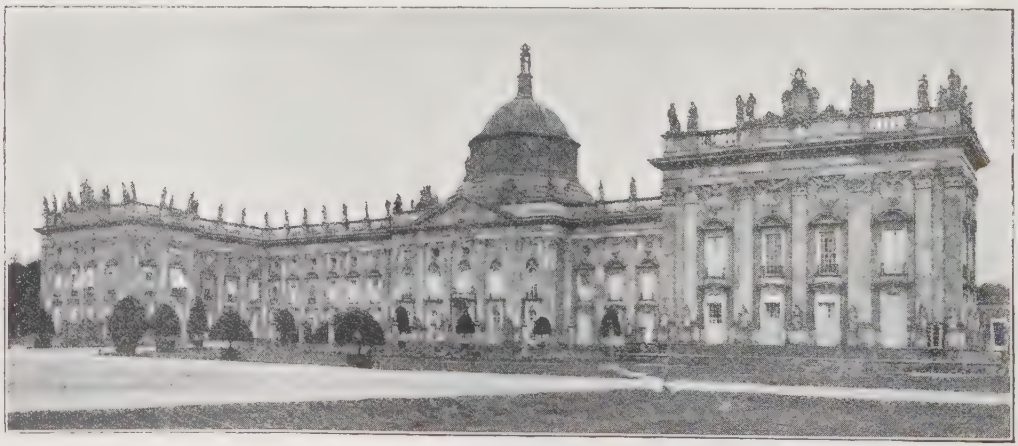
come a great distance to see their Sovereigns, and were prevented from doing so by the fact that Princess Luischen, who wore a very large white feather hat, and bowing right and left to the crowd, quite obscured her parents.

The Princess is very well brought up, and though she is perhaps not quite so strictly educated as her brothers, the rules laid down for her are rigidly followed, her lessons never being permitted to suffer interruption. She is already a good linguist, speaks French and English as well as her own language, shows a decided talent for music, and is likely to become a good pianist. Both the German Emperor and Empress are devoted to music, so that it would be curious should their children not have inherited this talent.

Princess Luischen rises early, and spends a great deal of her time out of doors. All the children of the Kaiser are devoted to animals; they are brought up to be kind and thoughtful for their pets, and are also taught how to handle the animals. The pets of the Royal children are very numerous, for they all have ponies and dogs, as well as tame deer and other animals, of which they are very fond. Princess Luischen has a lovely little pair of ponies, given her by the Sultan of Turkey, which she drives herself in a little white carriage. Very pretty she looks, driving herself about the private roads of the park, dressed all in white. She is already a capital whip, and manages her small steeds very gracefully. She is also a good horsewoman, and sits very square on horseback, to her father's great delight.

The Empress, who is a skilful horsewoman, is very often present in the riding school, mounted, when her children are receiving instruction, and she will often show them how to do a difficult feat, and, by her presence, encourage them to do their very best. In addition to riding, driving, and dancing, Princess Luischen is very fond of tennis, and other active games, while she is an excellent skater.

The young Princess Luischen has inherited her mother's pretty fair complexion and hair; her features are, however, more like her father's side of the House, and she promises to grow up a thorough Hohenzollern. She is very tall for her age, and, without being strikingly pretty, has a charming expression, especially when she smiles. She is almost always dressed in white, which is very becoming to her; indeed, the Empress shows excellent taste in the manner in which she clothes her little daughter.



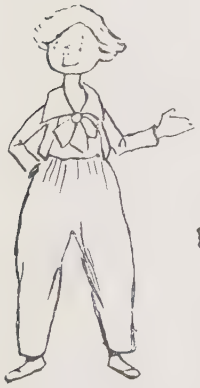
THE PALACE AT POTSDAM, WHERE PRINCESS LUISCHEN WAS BORN.

Here she has spent the greater portion of her young life.

The Birthday Present.

(*Frederick said to Henrietta: "Let us sow mustard and cress on the best parlour hearthrug so as to come up as a surprise on Mother's Birthday."*)

"It is a famous thing to do,
This is the way we'll do it, too!
A water-can—some bags of seed—
A hearthrug—that is all we need.
Oh, Henrietta! 'twill be sweet,
When Mother sees her Birthday Treat!"



The day arrived—the fateful morn,
The children rose at peep of dawn;
They threw the parlour open wide—
"Look, mother, look!" the darlings cried.

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Now little children, one and all,
Who play with top, and hoop, and ball,
Remember, sequels most unpleasant
Can follow Mother's Birthday Present.

SYBIL REID.

P.S.—I do not honestly know if mustard and cress will grow on *all* hearthrugs, so I earnestly advise my readers not to try, in case it *doesn't*, and the mustard and cress be wasted.

How Lettice Learnt a Lesson.

By DOROTHY NEVILE LEES.

Illustrated by G. H. EVISON.

I.

LETTICE was seventeen, and a very sweet seventeen, too, and she was one of the favourite girls in Miss Lestrange's school at Brighton, where she had spent the last three years. She was bright and pretty, full of life and merriment, and eager to have above everything else, what she termed "a good time." Certainly at school she had it, if popularity and success in both lessons and games were enough, and if she had been questioned she would have replied promptly that there was only one thing which was wanting to complete her happiness—all the other girls were rich and she was poor; if she could have as much money and as many clothes as they, the world would indeed be a sunny, golden place. But that was impossible, for most of Miss Lestrange's pupils were the daughters of wealthy men, holding high positions in England and abroad, while Lettice's father was the Vicar of a small country parish, who found his tiny income barely sufficient to provide for himself and the little daughter, who had been all in all to him since the death of his girl-wife seventeen years ago.

He had thought then, as he turned away through the driving snow from the freshly-covered grave, that for him there could never again be any brightness in life, nothing to live for in the future but his duty and his work. In the first desolate hopelessness of his loss he could hardly think of, or realise, the tiny baby which had been the last legacy of his dying wife. But as he entered the forlorn, deserted-looking house, the nurse, with true womanly tact, met him at the study door, and laying the queer little bundle in his arms, slipped away, leaving the baby to do its own work of comfort. As the father looked at the tiny sleeping face the first bitterness of his grief gave way to a quieter and less hopeless sorrow, and when at last he carried the baby upstairs and laid it in its cradle, he too, like many another, had found strength and consolation and hope through the influence of a little child.

As years went by, and Lettice passed out of babyhood, and learnt to toddle up and down the house and garden, and presently to run about the village and fields, she became more and more the light of her father's eyes. At all hours of the day her small hand was slipped into his, and her merry laugh sounded in his ears; to and fro in the parish she followed him, and every man, woman, and child had a kind word and a smile for "Th' parson's little lass."

So the course of her simple, happy, country life ran on until she was thirteen, nearly fourteen, and then a change came.

Mr. Trevor had just begun to worry himself about his little daughter's education, which had until then been carried on by a daily governess, and to wonder how he could possibly afford to send her to a suitable school, when a letter arrived from a rich aunt of his wife's, offering to pay all Lettice's fees as a boarder with Miss Lestrange.

Mr. Trevor would have shrunk from accepting anything for himself, and especially from his wife's relations, who, proud and wealthy people, had considered it beneath her to marry a country clergyman when she might have "married a title."

They had marked their disapproval by entirely ignoring both himself and his little girl; but now Lady Adela, more kind-hearted than the others, wrote offering to take Lettice's school expenses upon herself, and although his pride made it very bitter for him to accept such help, he felt that he had no right to injure the child's prospects. Thus Lettice went to Miss Lestrange, and after the first passionate outburst of sorrow at leaving her father, made herself very happy there.

Mr. Trevor himself half-regretted the choice of the school, for although he both liked and respected Miss Lestrange, he knew that her terms were very high, and that Lettice would be thrown entirely with rich girls, who were accustomed to the gratification of almost every wish. He feared lest, in spite of her sweet nature, she might grow discontented, and find the home surroundings, compared with those of her companions, dreary and bare. However, Lady Adela had decided upon the school, the mistress of which was an old friend of her own, so it was impossible for him to dictate; besides, Lettice must, sooner or later, mix with girls whose circumstances and lot in life were different from her own, and he trusted to his little daughter's good sense to show her that riches were, after all, only a matter of convenience, and not essential to the happiness of life.

Certainly at first Lettice remained quite unspoiled; she wrote her father long, quaint letters full of her new friends, the interest of her lessons, and the delight of the busy school life. When she went home for the holidays she seemed to be her simple, happy self; but as she grew older the letters were sometimes a little fretful, and often during the holidays she would complain of the dullness of the place, and speak longingly of the doings of her school-fellows, in Scotland, in London, or abroad.

"Daddy, I wish I could have a horse like Winifred Talbot!" she would say; or "Daddy, couldn't *we* go abroad somewhere for a holiday, just you and I together? It wouldn't cost much, I'm sure, and it's so dull in this stupid little place. If we could even go up to London and see some pictures and plays it would be lovely; *surely* we could manage that? And you would like it too, wouldn't you, dear?" stroking the rough grey head.

"Indeed, my darling," her father would answer wistfully, "I should love to be able to take you about and give you a good time! There is nothing on earth that I value so much as my little maid's happiness, but try to be patient, dear child, and contented to stop at home with your old Dad now, and perhaps some day a better time will come." But although he tried to speak brightly, Lettice often grieved him sorely when she referred, half-enviously, to the advantages of other girls, and compared their lot with her own.

He never blamed her, even in thought, for, after all, it was hardly unnatural that a bright, eager, impetuous girl should long for more pleasure and variety in her life, and if she wounded him sometimes, it was only in thoughtlessness, and because she did not realise that his great love made him feel every privation of hers far more bitterly than he could feel anything for himself, for with all her faults the girl adored her father, and would not willingly have troubled him.

So the years went by until Lettice was seventeen, nearly eighteen, and she was to leave school at the end of the winter term.

It only wanted three weeks to that time when one November afternoon, after the classes for the day were over, the senior girls at Miss Lestrange's sat in their bright, warm study, busy with books or embroidery, while a few were occupying the half-hour before tea in writing their letters home.

Lettice was leaning over her desk in the corner, the firelight shining on her soft, reddish hair, and flushing her pretty face with more than its wonted colour, as she read over the letter which she had just finished writing to her father.

"Darling Daddy," it ran: "An awfully nice girl here, Virginia Cecil, has asked me to go back with her and spend a fortnight, and I should love to go. She lives in London and is very rich, and she says we shall go to theatres and all sorts of things, and her mother is giving a ball for her coming-out as well, and it would be so splendid. Do let me go, Daddy dear!

"Should you mind dreadfully if I were away for Christmas this once? Of course I wouldn't go if you would mind the least bit, but it would be a lovely chance of having a good time, wouldn't it, and you always say you like me to enjoy myself. Please write at once as it is very important, and say if you mind, for of course if you want me I will come home. Take great care of yourself, Dad!

"Your loving Lettice."

"There, Virgie," she exclaimed triumphantly, as she solemnly gummed up the envelope, and laid the important document with the other

letters, "I've writen to ask if I may come, and I am sure Dad will say yes, for he always likes me to have a good time, and this will be glorious. You are a dear old girl to ask me! I can hardly sit still for joy!"

Virginia laughed.

"What an excitable creature you are, Letty!" she said, looking up from her book; "you always go half wild over everything. I should think it is just as well that you do live in a quiet place, for I am sure if you had a really eventful life you would go out of your mind!"

Lettice tossed her head.

"Indeed, I hope I am not going to spend my days in a stupid little country place!" she said indignantly. "How would you like to be buried alive, Virgie, with no society of any kind except the farmers' wives? I want to have a beautiful, full, exciting life; I don't want to stagnate in a little corner of the world!"

"I don't know about 'stagnating,'" said Isobel Forbes, a quiet, grave-eyed girl, whose father, a thinker and well-known man of letters, had taught her to form lofty ideals, and to take a broad, serious view of life; "I don't see why anyone need stagnate because they spend their lives in one place, and that a small one. Father says the most common-place things are full of elements, both of the pathetic and the tragic, and that the interest of life isn't found by fidgetting after fresh experiences, but by getting the most out of those we have."

"Of course," said Lettice quickly; "I daresay you're right, Isobel, and any way, you're a darling, and my dearest friend but two; still, I haven't got a philosophical and contemplative mind (are those the right words?), and I want to have a good time now while I am young, and then I may settle down later on. At all events, I am sure of some fun this winter with Virginia, for I know Dad wouldn't disappoint me for the world." And Lettice did not reckon without her host.

Two days later there was a fat letter on the hall table addressed to "Miss Trevor," which, when opened, gave full and free permission for Lettice to pay the longed-for visit.

"I cannot pretend," wrote Mr. Trevor, "that I shall not miss my little daughter sorely at Christmas, but you know, dear child, that there is nothing I care for so much as your happiness, so go and have as good a time as you can, and write and tell your old Dad all about it, that he may share the pleasure too." And Lettice, who was too young and thoughtless to read between the lines, saw none of the unselfishness and half-wistful affection of the letter, and only gloried in having "such a dear old father, who always wanted her to enjoy herself."

II.

So the great subject was settled, and three days before Christmas Lettice took her seat by Virginia in the train which was to carry her to London, that golden city of her dreams.

She was seized with a sudden fit of shyness as the carriage stopped at the great house in Park Lane, and she kept close to Virginia as they went up the wide staircase to the drawing-room, where, the footman told them, Lady Cecil was at tea, having just come in from a drive; but her friend's mother, in spite of her stateliness, proved very kind, and quickly set the girl at her ease, and when, an hour later, Lettice found herself sitting with Virginia over a blazing bedroom fire, while the maid moved softly about unpacking their clothes, she felt that her good time had indeed begun.

"There's the dressing-bell," said Virginia, suddenly jumping up. "What are you going to put on, Letty, your white muslin?"

"Yes, I suppose so!" and Lettice sighed, for she was just reaching an age when, having done up her hair, she found dress a most interesting subject, and longed to have really fashionable and well-made clothes.

"I shall wear mine, too," said Virginia, unheedingly; "for no one will be here to-night, so it will be quite enough, and mother says that on one of the next few days I must go shopping with her and she will see about all my new things. You will like to see the shops, won't you, Letty?" and Virginia chattered on gaily of all the delights in store.

Certainly, the days seemed to flash by, filled as they were with sight-seeing of every kind, and Lettice lived in a whirl of gaiety such as she had never experienced before.

It was not until one morning about a week after their arrival that Lady Cecil summoned the girls to join her in a shopping expedition, for, as she said, she must see about a dress for Virginia for the ball the following week.

"Why, Letty," said her friend gaily, as they sat in the room at the fashionable dressmaker's, while Lady Cecil was discussing her daughter's dress. "It will be your coming-out too, as well as mine, won't it? What fun! But what are you going to wear?"

"I don't know," said Lettice, wistfully, "I am afraid I have nothing that will do!" and then,

as if prompted by something, she hardly knew what, she added, "Perhaps I ought to get a new frock!"

"Of course you ought!" cried Virginia, eagerly. "Here, Mamma, Lettice wants to see about a dress too, for you know it will be her coming-out as well as mine, and she must have something to wear!"

"Very well, dear," said her mother placidly. "Of course Lettice would be needing an evening dress before long I suppose, if not at once, so it is a good opportunity to get it now, as I daresay," she added, turning to the girl with a smile, "that living out in the country it is difficult to see about new things?"

Lettice flushed hotly at the thought of her own imprudence, and for one moment she was seized with the impulse to tell Lady Cecil that she had no right to incur such an expense, and one which she knew her father could ill afford, but it passed in a moment as she realised the difficulty of owning such a thing, not only to Lady Cecil and Virginia, but also before the dressmaker and her assistants. A half-defiant feeling came over her; why should not she enjoy herself and have a good time like other girls? Why should she, who was undoubtedly as pretty, if not prettier, than Virginia, appear at the ball in a dowdy old frock? And, after all, what did it matter? She was sure her father would manage it somehow, and he always said he cared for nothing so much as her enjoyment, so surely there could be no harm in it, and she would say that it must not be a very expensive dress.

Thus Lettice reasoned with herself, and

"LETTICE WAS SEIZED WITH A SUDDEN FIT OF SHYNESS AS THE CARRIAGE STOPPED AT THE GREAT HOUSE IN PARK LANE."—(*p.* 544.)

soothed her own conscience until the opportunity for speaking out was past, and one of the assistants was bringing forward exquisite frocks such as she had never pictured even in her dreams, and arranging them before her upon stands.

"Oh, that one is lovely, Lettice," cried Virginia, pointing to a white crêpe de chine upon a shimmering satin foundation; a dress which looked to Lettice's inexperienced eyes very sweet and simple, and as if it could not be expensive, but which in reality owed its very air of simplicity to its costliness and perfection.

"How much is it?" asked Lettice. "——ten guineas? oh, I could not afford so much as that!"

"Have you nothing less expensive?" asked Lady Cecil of the dressmaker.

The woman hesitated for a moment.

"Well, madam," she said, "if the young lady would like to see it, I have another dress, almost an exact copy of this; it has been standing as a model in the window, and has got slightly soiled, which lessens its value; the marks would not, however, show by an artificial light, and the price would be only seven guineas."

"Well, dear, what do you think?" asked Lady Cecil, as the dress was set before them. "Do you think your father would like that?"

Lettice laughed nervously. "Oh, yes, I am sure he would!" she said, "and so I think—I think, Lady Cecil, that perhaps I had better have it!"

"Very well, dear, and I am sure you will look charming in it! You had better give Mr. Trevor's address to Madame Angrave, and then she will send her account direct to him, for there is no need to settle it immediately," and Lady Cecil turned away to give some last directions about her daughter's dress.

It never occurred to her what a storm of conflicting thoughts were raging in Lettice's heart. She knew little of the girl's circumstances beyond the fact that she was an only child and that her father was a clergyman, and if she had given the matter a thought she would have concluded that anyone who could send his daughter to Miss Lestrange's school must be well off. Besides, seven guineas seemed to her very moderate for a ball-dress compared with the sum she was paying for her own daughter's, so the whole affair appeared to her perfectly natural; and as for Virginia, she had grown up with so little idea of the actual value of money or of the cost of dress, that it never struck her that although seven guineas might be very little in her mother's estimation, it was a good deal more than Lettice was justified in spending. However, the purchase was made, the dress sent home and the account entered in the dressmaker's books, and when at last the evening of the ball came there was no doubt that Lettice looked lovely in the white frock; indeed, she received quite enough attention to turn her pretty head. But once or twice during the dance as she caught sight of her own reflection in a mirror, she felt a sudden pang at the thought that in three days' time she must face her father and tell him of that hateful bill. It was not that she expected he would scold her—there was no fear of that; it was quite a different feeling which made her turn away quickly from the graceful, white-clad figure, and try to forget herself in her partner's lively talk. If only she could have put off the evil moment indefinitely! but time waits for no man, and actions bring their own consequences, however much we long to escape.

The last few days seemed to fly, until Lettice found herself taking her place in the train for her homeward journey.

"Good-bye, dear! I've had a most lovely visit and enjoyed myself more than I can say!" she cried to Virginia, as the engine steamed out of the station; but all the same, the enjoyment would have been more perfect but for the remembrance of those silky folds and flounces packed away in her box.

III.

It was five o'clock, and the short January day was already drawing to a close, when the train stopped in the little station at Farnham, and Lettice saw her father standing on the platform.

How tired and worn he looked, as the light from the dingy lamp fell upon him! But there was no mistaking the eager welcome in his face as he caught sight of Lettice, and hurried forward to the carriage door.

"My darling!" he cried, holding her closely, "I can't tell you how glad I am to have you back! The time has been very long, my Letty, but I have got you now, and there will be no more going back to school; you'll stop and keep house for your old Dad now!"

"I'm awfully glad to be back!" said the girl earnestly, and then as he put her into a cab. she asked, "How did you come in from Brocton, Daddy?"

"Walked, darling!"

"Daddy! you didn't! How can you be so

careless of yourself? It shows you want me to look after you!" and the girl put her hand caressingly on his worn and somewhat threadbare sleeve.

"Nonsense, beloved, don't you worry your little head about a stupid old fellow like me! But I'll tell you what, dear. I felt that now that I was going to have the care of a real 'grown-up' young lady, I must smarten my shabby self up a little, so I have got some patterns for a new suit, and you shall choose it, little madam, for you have been complaining every holiday of what your fastidious ladyship was pleased to call my 'disgraceful old clothes!'"

Lettice bit her lip. That chiffon frock weighed upon her mind as if its folds were lead instead of gossamer, but she would not tell him yet—not just yet!

The Vicarage looked very bright and homelike as its lights shone out through the trees, and when the cab drove up to the door, there was Mrs. Broome, Lettice's faithful old nurse, who, with the assistance of a little girl, did all the household work, standing in the hall to give "Missy" a welcome home.

"I thought you would rather have tea in the study the first night, Letty," said Mr. Trevor, ushering her in. "It will seem like old times, won't it! Come, dear, you are sure you are not tired?" he asked anxiously as he swept a huge pile of books and papers on to the floor to make room for her in the great arm-chair by the fire.

"No, not a bit, thank you," said Lettice, throwing aside her hat and coat and stretching out her feet to the warmth; "How cosy this is! I am so glad to be home!"

Mr. Trevor's face brightened.

"And I am glad to have you, darling, and glad that you should be pleased to come. I was afraid lest you would find it very different after your good time in town—you must tell me all about it, I want to hear every scrap of your news."

So Lettice hid her heavy heart beneath a flow of gay chatter, but it was only putting off the evil moment, and the weight on her mind continued the same, in spite of her merry talk, just as the boulders which lie at the bottom of a stream remain unchanged in spite of the sparkling water which goes singing by.

And every moment her remorse grew more bitter as her eyes wandered from the shabby carpet and furniture, to her father's worn face.

When tea was over she slipped away to her room to unpack while he wrote some letters for the post, but as she closed the door she heard him call, "Don't be long, dear child, and then we can have a nice cosy talk over the fire!"

"ONCE OR TWICE DURING THE DANCE LETTICE FELT A SUDDEN PANG THAT IN THREE DAYS' TIME SHE MUST TELL HER FATHER OF THAT HATEFUL BILL."—(*p.* 546.)

Her little room, as she went in, looked very warm and bright; a cheerful fire was burning in the grate, and beside it was drawn up an arm-chair, which she knew had been brought from her father's study. Some Christmas roses were arranged in a glass upon the dresing-table, and it was evident that Mr. Trevor had thought of every possible way in which he might add to the comfort of his "little girl."

As Lettice opened her box, the dress, with its shimmering folds, lay on the very top; its beauty seemed to mock her now, and she lifted it out with impatient hands and locked it away in a drawer. Then, having slowly unpacked and arranged her things, she went to the window and stood looking thoughtfully out across the snowy garden, until, as the clock in the church tower below the hill struck eight, she turned reluctantly, and went downstairs with a heavy heart.

As she entered the study Mr. Trevor was still at his writing-table, surrounded by a pile of freshly-written letters and notes, but when he saw her he threw down his pen, gathered them all up, and rang the bell for the servant to take them to the post. Then he flung himself wearily into the arm-chair by the fire.

"Come, little girl!" he said, holding out his hand with the smile which made his worn, rugged face so beautiful, "come and have a talk. Why, dear child, what is it that makes you so quiet and grave? Has anything gone wrong? Won't you tell your Dad what it is?"

Lettice was sitting on the arm of the chair, and at his question she burst into tears.

"Oh, Daddy!" she sobbed, "I've done such a dreadful thing, I shall never forgive myself, never! You can't think how selfish and hateful I've been!" and she hid her face on his shoulder.

"Hush, dear, don't cry like that, but tell me what has happened. I daresay it is not anything so very bad after all. I am sure I can always trust my Letty!" and he took the girl's hand in his.

So bit by bit, and with many tears Lettice told the story, and her father never spoke, nor when she had finished, did he say one word of reproach; he only sat very quiet, gazing into the fire, until poor Lettice could bear it no longer.

"Oh, Daddy, do scold me!" she cried. "I could bear anything sooner than to see you look like that, it makes me hate myself so, and I feel as if I should never be happy again!"

Mr. Trevor roused himself with an effort. "My poor child," he said kindly, "why should I blame you? I feel more ready to blame myself for putting you in the way of such temptations, for it was only natural that when you went among other girls you should want to be like them. I, with all my experience of the world, ought to have tried to prepare you better and to shield you more, but I only wanted your happiness. I know how hard poverty is to bear, and a thousand times harder for a fresh young girl like you than for an old fellow like me, but I've done my best, Letty, indeed I have, and I tried not to let you feel it more than I could help."

"Oh, Daddy, darling Daddy!" sobbed Lettice. "*Don't* talk like that! You'll break my heart! I shall always hate myself for being so selfish, and I shall never forgive myself, never! I can't bear even to look at that horrid dress now! I thought it would make me so happy, but it has only made me miserable since the first day."

Mr. Trevor smiled.

"Then the poor little frock has shown you that even the very smartest of clothes may prove to be the very vanity of vanities so far as true pleasure goes!" he said. "No, my child," as Lettice looked at him half reproachfully through her tears, "I am not laughing at you, and I understand just how miserable you feel, but if this teaches you that happiness does not lie in the number or the costliness of our possessions, I shall not grudge even seven guineas for a party frock!"

"Daddy," Lettice whispered presently, stroking the dear grey head. "Couldn't I—couldn't I choose the pattern for the new suit now?"

"No, darling, not just now!" and although not another word was spoken on the subject Lettice understood, and no reproach, no punishment, could have been so bitter as the knowledge that her father must suffer as the result of her selfishness.

A few days later the girl came into the study with red cheeks and downcast eyes.

"Daddy," she said, rather nervously, "Did you know that Mrs. Armitage wants someone to teach her children in the mornings? and I think she would be glad to have me, and—and—if you don't mind, I want very, very much to go!"

"But, my dear child, this is rather sudden, and I thought you had always set yourself against any work of the kind and said you could not bear the idea of it?"

"Yes, I know, but it is different now, and I want to help you some way, Daddy; I shouldn't be so dreadfully unhappy if I felt I was doing something for you, even if it were only something very small, so do say I can go!"

Mr. Trevor looked kindly into the earnest face. He did not tell Lettice that he felt it far easier

to bear her burdens with his own than to let any suffering rest upon her, for he understood the girl's eager, impetuous, affectionate nature too well for that, and knew that now her repentance had been quickened she would find no peace but in trying to show her love and desire to help in some practical manner, so he set aside his own distaste at the thought of his Lettice, whom he longed to protect and care for in every way, going out to work for herself, and only said, as he stroked her soft wavy hair, "It shall be as you wish, dear child!"

So Lettice went to Mrs. Armitage every morning, and worked bravely and did her best, but she did not soon forget the lesson she had learnt.

It often went to her heart, through that long winter, to see her father denying himself in countless trifling things, which he had no idea she ever noticed, and on which she dared not remark. To see him come in worn out by the long walk to Farnham, because he had saved the cost of a 'bus; to go into his study and find an almost empty grate; to see him as he went about the house in the evenings, turning off the superfluous gas, and to notice the shabbiness of his clothes. Many a time, when the girl felt tempted to complain of the dulness of her life, and to sigh for pleasures that were out of reach, she would pull herself up with a burning sense of shame.

But at last the dreary winter came to an end, and with it ended also that longer, harder winter of depression and discontent.

Early the following summer another living was offered to Mr. Trevor; not a very rich one, certainly, but to him and Lettice it seemed like wealth, and the future, which had been so dark, now looked very beautiful and bright.

"MR. TREVOR, HIS GAZE FULL OF PRIDE IN HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER'S BEAUTY, STOOPED TO KISS THE SWEET UPTURNED FACE."

On the first night, when they were settled in the new home, Lettice appeared at dinner, a graceful figure in a very charming frock. It was the first time she had ever put on the unlucky dress since that evening, months before.

"No, Daddy dear, it isn't vanity!" she said, as she met his amused gaze, full of pride in his little daughter's beauty; "But I don't want ever to forget all the lessons I learnt from this dress." And then, as he stooped to kiss the sweet upturned face, she whispered, "And even now, when it won't be wrong any longer for me to buy pretty things, I want to keep it, so that if ever I feel inclined to be discontented or to grumble, I may remember what you have often said, that 'happiness does not lie in the things that we possess.'"

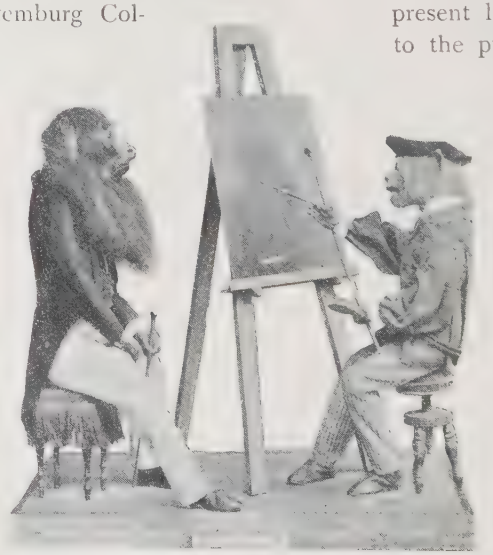
M. M.

AN UNLUCKY HUNTER—A POLECAT AND DOGS.

BY H. L. ADAM.

THE usual aim of a conscientious taxidermist is to present the lifeless animals he is dealing with in as exact a representation of the living posture and locality as he can attain to; his intention being, in a word, to retain the memory of the animal as it lived. Not so, however, the particular naturalist I now have under notice, in his tableaux of humorous groups contained in what is known as the "Wurtemburg Collection of animals."

It is curious to notice, during the revolutions of the cycle of time, how persons, customs, fashions, amusements, and objects of interest come and go, rise and fall, and recur, in estimation and popularity. In the recent Children's Exhibition at the Crystal Palace these Wurtemburg tableaux were voted pre-eminent among the attractions, yet the same exhibits, in their then pristine condition, amused and entertained the public at the International Exhibition of 1851, which was instigated by the late Queen and her noble Consort. The tableaux have been, of course, subjected to a process of redressing and refurbishing. The pictures which accompany this article have never before been published, nor, so far as I can discover, has a written account of them, on the present lines, before been given to the public.



MONKEY R.A. PAINTS HIS BROTHER MONKEY'S PORTRAIT.

All the stuffed and mounted animals under notice were executed by Herr Ploncquet, of Stuttgart, a skilful taxidermist of exceptional talent, whose fame in this country dates too far back to be familiar to the young of the present generation. He personally superintended the packing and despatching of the collection, but the remounting and arranging were carried out by Herr Muller, a brother

THE STOAT ASKS THE ERMINE TO BE HIS WIFE.

"THE BARBER."

ON HIS WAY TO THE HOLY LAND, REYNARD, DISGUISED AS A PILGRIM, ASSAULTS THE HARE.

naturalist, who for several years was Curator of the Museums at Tiflis, and Herr Tiedemann, his pupil, both of Stuttgart.

In constructing these humorous tableaux, the object Herr Ploncquet had in view was to present the animals — which are all small, and in some cases embryos — in occupations peculiar to human beings. The humour of this idea is apparent, and judging from the pictures that accompany this article, eminently successful. The grouping and

1. INTERCEPTING DESPATCHES. 2. TWO DAY LABOURERS—HARES. 3. EVENING SCENES ABOUT THE MARKET FOUNTAINS AT STUTTGART—GEESE AND DOGS DISCUSSING THE DAY'S DOINGS.

conception, it will be observed, are essentially Continental. Some of them — the bulk of them—are individual groups, complete in themselves, and invariably self-explanatory. Many, however, tell in stages a connected story. One of this series, consisting of eighteen tableaux, tells the story of "Reynard the Fox," a subject contained in one of Goethe's poems, and utilised by the painter Kaulbach. The story thus illustrated runs as follows: A royal proclamation is issued by the King of Beasts, the lion to wit, in which it is commanded that all animals do foregather on the instant within the precincts of the royal court. This mandate is duly obeyed by all except Reynard, the cunning, who remains indifferent, within the gates of his castle, Malepartus. At this slight to the royal court the King expresses anger and amazement, many of his subjects accusing the absent one of grievous offences. One, Chanticleer, has in particular a serious indictment against him, he (Reynard) having one night broken into Chanticleer's farm, while disguised as a hermit, and barbarously murdered his children. The King decides that Reynard shall suffer for this, and despatches the Bear in search of him. Bruin failing in his mission, the Cat, bearing a royal summons, is sent. Feline cunning is however, not equal to that of the Fox, who again escapes. At length he capitulates to the Badger, and consents to stand his trial in court. The result of this is he is condemned to be executed, but while on the scaffold, diverts his own destruction by slyly imparting to the King the whereabouts of a hidden treasure. In this he is borne out by the Hare. Reynard then, having gained his freedom, disguises himself as a pilgrim, with a rosary and a pilgrim's staff, and takes a journey to the Holy Land. On the way he attempts to assault an unsuspecting traveller, a Hare, who straightway conveys the news to the King, the latter determining to destroy both Reynard and his castle. This, however, does not come to pass, for Reynard proves victor in a combat with one of his accusers, returning to his castle loaded with courtly favours. Thus the story concludes with cunning *in excelsis*.

THE SERENADE.
Cats and Hog.

MADAME PUSSY-CATT WALKS ABROAD IN THE COOL OF THE EVENING, ACCOMPANIED BY HER HUSBAND AND THEIR SERVANT, JOHN BABOON.

Among the individual groups, very amusing are

"A DETERMINED DUEL."
Six Foxes settle their disputes with the sword.

those illustrating "A Village Dentist" (a pine marten and a hare), "A Tea Fight" (eight little kittens), "A Frog-Ball" (twenty-one tree frogs), "A Loving Couple" (a stoat and an ermine), "Heirs Mourning over a Deceased Relative" (six cats and a polecat), "An Interrupted Dinner" (seven hedgehogs and a dog), "Table Turning" (six ermines), "Receivers of Stolen Goods Surprised by a Policeman" (six hares and a fox), "Sergeant and Recruit" (a bulldog and a hare), "A Portrait Painter" (a howling monkey and another monkey), "Washerwomen" (five geese and a goshawk), "A Judicial Sitting" (a hog, a fox, a bulldog, a hare, and barn owls), "An Evening Walk" (a golden pheasant, a fox, and a hare), "A Lady in Crinoline with her Husband and Servant" (a cat, a red howling monkey, and a baboon).

It is quite clear that upon these groups a great deal of labour and thought must have been expended, and the vitality of their attractiveness is eloquent enough testimony of their inherent skill. Not only the postures, but the facial expressions, are so admirably selected and arranged as to be quite ludicrous in their resemblance to human beings. The dressing also is good.

"TABLE TURNING."
Six lady ermines hold a séance.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

CHAPTER I.

"WHAT is your letter, my dear? You seem annoyed. No bad news, I hope!" said the master of Chedworth Manor, looking across the table to where his wife sat behind the urn, frowning over the sheet which she held in her hand. She was a handsome, well-preserved woman, with aquiline features, thin lips, and eyes of a pale, indefinite blue. She looked up as he spoke, then threw down the letter with a sigh of impatience.

"Oh, bad news, of course! When did we ever return from a holiday without finding something of the sort awaiting us? It's from Stephen Charrington. Says he would have written before, but heard that we were abroad, and did not know where to direct. Edgar is dead! he died a fortnight ago, and the funeral was on Friday week. I never knew a man who married improvidently, and had a huge family, who did *not* die before he reached middle age! It seems a judgment on them; and here is another instance. Forty-nine, his last birthday! He ought to have lived for another twenty years at least!"

Mrs. Loftus spoke with an air of injury which seemed to imply that the deceased gentleman had died out of pure perversity, and her husband drew his brows together in disapproving fashion. Even after twenty-five years of married life his wife's heartless selfishness could still give him a twinge of shocked surprise, when, as now, it was obtrusively displayed. He himself made no claims to philanthropy, but one expected some natural feeling from a woman, and with all his faults, Edgar Charrington had had close claim on her sympathy.

"He was your brother, my dear!" he said, drily; "I suppose the poor fellow would not have died if he could have helped it. We have not seen anything of him for a long time, but he used to be a most attractive fellow. I thought he would have made his mark. Never met a man with so many gifts—painting, music, writing—he used to take them each up in turn, and do equally well in each!"

"But excel in nothing! That was the undoing of Edgar; he had not the application to keep to one thing at a time, but must always be flying off to something new. That disastrous marriage was like a millstone round his neck, and practically doomed him to failure. Oh, I know what you are going to say! There was nothing against Elma, and you admired her, of course, because she was pretty and helpless; but I shall always maintain that it was practically suicide for Edgar, with his Bohemian nature, to

marry a penniless girl, with no influence to help him on in the world. How they have managed to live at all, I can't imagine. He never confided in me, and I made a point of not inquiring; to tell the truth, I lived in dread of his wanting to borrow money, and one has enough to do with one's own claims. I think he was offended because we never invited the children, for I have scarcely heard from him for the last five years. Really, it was too great an experiment! I can't imagine what they must be like, brought up in that little village, with next to no education. Social savages, I should say!"

"How many children were there? I've forgotten how they come after the first two. Stephen and Philippa visited us once long ago, and I remember thinking her an uncommonly handsome child, with a spirit of her own which will probably stand her in good stead now. The boy was not so interesting. How many are there besides these two?"

"Oh, I don't know. Dozens! There was always a baby, I remember," returned Mrs. Loftus, impatiently. "Goodness knows what is to become of them now that they are left orphans, with practically no means of support. Stephen seems quite bewildered with the responsibility. He says he is anxious to see us as his father's nearest relations, and to consult with us as to the wisest thing to be done. I think we had better decline all responsibility. It is a thankless task to interfere with other people's business, and young folks are so opinionated. I shall write a letter of sympathy, and say that as I know so little of their circumstances and surroundings, I do not feel myself competent to advise."

"Just as you please, my dear; but you must speak for yourself alone. I shall certainly have a chat with the poor young fellow. It is the least we can do, and I am only sorry I was not back in time to attend the funeral. I am afraid we have behaved shabbily to poor Edgar while he was alive, and I should have liked to pay him that respect in death. This is Monday. . . . I must attend to one or two affairs here, but I'll run down to Leabourne towards the end of the week, and put up at the Inn. Tell Stephen I'll write later on, and say when he may expect me."

Mr. Loftus pushed his chair back from the table, and tossed his serviette on a chair. He looked decidedly ruffled in temper, and injured and sorry for himself into the bargain. If there was one thing he disliked more than another, it was to have anything approaching a dissension with the members of his household. Peace at all price had been the motto of a character, kindly enough, yet lacking the necessary strength to make a stand for the right, and already he was beginning to doubt his own wisdom, and to reflect sorrowfully how much less trouble it would have involved to have taken Gertrude's advice. Half way down the table he stopped short with a sudden softening of the face, and laid his hands caressingly on the shoulders of a pale, languid-looking girl, who had been a passive listener to the late conversation.

"You had better write too, and sympathise with your poor cousins, Avice! You wouldn't like it, would you, if *you* were to lose your poor old father?"

The girl smiled at him, affectionately enough, but made no response until the door had closed, when she turned to her mother with an expression of real anxiety upon her face.

"Shall I have to wear mourning, mother? Will it be necessary?"

"Cer—tainly not! I should not dream of such a thing. It is quite out of fashion now-a-days, for any but the nearest relations, and it would be a sin to put aside all those lovely French frocks until they were out-of-date. It would be different if we lived in the same place; but you are not in the least likely to come in contact with your cousins. I can't think what has made your father take up this attitude all of a sudden; but if he insists upon going to Leabourne, I shall certainly go too. He is so carried away by the impulse of the moment that there is no knowing to what mad plan he might not commit himself. The best thing your cousins can do will be to stay quietly where they are, and take in paying guests to make ends meet. Quite good people do that now-a-days, and with so many girls, they would not need much extra service in the house. From what Stephen says, I fear they have some notion of coming up to town, but that I shall strongly denounce. Most rash and improvident for them, and uncomfortable for us! They would, no doubt, expect us to take them up, and introduce them to our friends, and would be offended when they discovered that we had no intention of doing anything of the kind. Much better stay where they are, and work among their old friends."

"I should like to see Philippa again. It's an age since she was here, but I remember her quite well. She was so lively and amusing! And there is another girl just my age, with a pretty, uncommon name . . . Faith, is it?—no, Hope. Uncle Edgar sent me a little sketch of her on my birthday, years ago, and it was so pretty! I'd rather like to know my cousins, mother, if they

were presentable. It's so lonely being an only child."

Mrs. Loftus looked at her daughter, and something like a quiver passed across the hardness of her face. Avice was her darling, her idol, the only creature on earth whom she really loved; and every now and again a spasm of alarm gripped her heart as she noted the languid speech and movement, the fragile form, and pallid complexion which distinguished the girl from her companions. Everything within the power of love and money had been done to make her strong and happy, yet she continued listless and ailing, seeming to regard the very amusements provided for her as so many penalties to be endured with resignation. Something must be wrong, and very wrong, to make a girl of twenty-one assume so unnatural an attitude. The mother checked a sigh half way, and said, caressingly:

"There is no reason for you to be dull, dearest. I am always ready to invite anyone you may fancy. Surely, with all your friends, you need never be alone! What about Truda Bennett? If you like liveliness, you could hardly improve upon her, and The Knoll is a nice house for you to visit in return. Shall I write and ask her to come next week?"

"No thank you, dear, I'd rather not. Truda is very nice, but she tires me out. She dislikes being quiet, and cares only for rushing about all day long. She doesn't amuse *me*—I have to amuse *her!* The nice part of relations would be that one would not have to be on ceremony with them all the time. Couldn't I come down with you to Leabourne next week, mother, and see what the girls were like, and if I should care to invite one of them here?"

"You could, of course; but I strongly advise you to do nothing of the sort. Your Uncle Edgar has been dead only a fortnight, remember, and though I don't think he was an especially devoted father, the children will naturally be upset and distressed. It would be very dull for you, with the girls weeping, and your father and Stephen discussing money matters, and ten to one a dreary, uncomfortable Inn. Better stay at home, and let me bring back a report. In any case you would not care to invite one of them here until the first few months are over, and she was able to go about and make herself agreeable. It would be depressing to have her about in her first deep black."

"Oh, dear, yes. I couldn't stand that. I'd rather be alone than have anyone in low spirits," agreed Avice, fervently, the idea that she herself might possibly help to cheer and console, never once dawning on her self-engrossed brain. "You say that the girls must be savages, mother, but I should think they can hardly help being interesting. Aunt Elma was a beauty, and Uncle Edgar was a genius—and some of them, at least, must have inherited his gifts. Why do you say he was not a devoted father? From my vague recollection he seemed very proud of the children."

"Oh, yes, he was proud enough; but they worried him when they were young, and as they grew older, I think he felt that they criticised him, and realised how he had wasted his opportunities. He was devoted to Elma, for she worshipped him meekly all her life, and was convinced that no such genius had ever existed. Your father is right. I never knew a more brilliant young man than he was at twenty-one, but what is there to show for it now? A few songs, two or three novels and volumes of poetry, and a number of pictures and sketches which he was ashamed even to sign! He was always growing discouraged, turning from one thing to another, and bringing his standard down and down to meet the taste of the market. His songs became more and more clap-trap and commonplace; his stories more sensational, his pictures of the cheaply-pretty order which sell at provincial exhibitions. I believe at the bottom of his heart he realised his downfall, and when Elma died, and he had not her adoring admiration to keep up his faith in himself, he fretted himself ill. The last time I saw him he was a wreck—mentally and physically, and I fancy those girls must have had a trying time of it before the end."

CHAPTER II.

STEPHEN CHARRINGTON had expressed a wish to consult with his aunt and uncle less from any preconceived intention than from a feeling of helplessness which took possession of him as he penned the news of his father's death. It had seemed to him at the moment that the advice of anyone older and wiser than himself would be of value in deciding plans for the future, but no sooner was the letter irretrievably on its way than he began to tremble at the prospect of telling Philippa of what he had done. Philippa had been left co-trustee with himself, and she was not a young woman who would meekly be put on one side. What she thought, she said; what she willed, she accomplished; and anything like interference was to her as the brandishing of a red rag in the face of a bull. Stephen resolved to wait for a favourable opportunity before break-

ing the news of the intended visit, and to introduce it casually in the midst of a general conversation, when there would be less chance of a "scene." On Tuesday he decided to speak on Wednesday; on Wednesday there seemed abundant reason why he should postpone the disclosure until Thursday; on Thursday his uncle's note arrived announcing his arrival on the following day, and there could be no longer delay. Stephen betook himself to the morning-room, where his sisters sat in conclave, and hid himself behind a newspaper, awaiting his opportunity.

Despite the gloominess of the autumn day, and the mournful nature of the work on hand, the scene was far from being doleful. To begin with, the background was pretty—a long, low apartment, half studio, half work-room, its walls washed a rich crimson hue, and covered with unmounted sketches, plaster casts on brackets, and a hundred quaint, artistic odds and ends. Against this background the four sisters made an interesting group, as they busied thmselves with the sewing on hand. There was no money forthcoming to pay dressmaking bills, and little enough to buy material, so it was necessary to use up what was in the house, to turn and twist, and re-make, and cover over, and patch together—an occupation which involved no little ingenuity in addition to the mere manual labour.

Philippa stood by the table, the big, cutting-out scissors in her hands; a handsome girl with clearly-cut aquiline features, and dark hair which rippled back in a soft, smoke-like mass, and was coiled gracefully together on the nape of her neck. Her shoulders were broad and square, and had a trick of broadening still further in dignified, self-assertive fashion, when their owner was annoyed, or wished to exert her authority. Madge always declared that she looked at Philippa's shoulders when she wished to see how the wind blew; but then Madge was so daring and inconsequent in her remarks that no one paid much attention to what *she* said! Behold her now, running seams on the old-fashioned treadle machine, with bent back, and long, pointed chin poked forward over the needle. As often as not a jerk of the hands, or an erratic movement of the feet, would be followed by a jar, a knot, a breaking of the thread, and when this occurred Madge would clench both fists together, and mouth dumb anathemas, the while she rolled tragic eyes to the ceiling. If there was one thing on earth which she detested more than another, it was plain sewing, but this morning she had gallantly volunteered to do the machining, and machine she would, no matter what tortures it might cost her! She was a little scrap of a thin, starved-looking creature, with a long, narrow face, plain features, and just the prettiest, happiest, most lovable pair of hazel eyes you can possibly imagine. Even to-day they looked happy, for there was a certain transparency and twinkling light in the iris which seemed independent of varying moods. Madge was eighteen, and was going to be an artist, and have pictures hung on the line in the Academy, or know the reason why, and in her opinion her time would have been much more profitably employed daubing in the attic, than doing dull, useful work downstairs; but, as has been said, there are occasions when personal inclinations have to be laid in the dust.

Theo sat by herself, unpicking a coloured lining from a black grenadine dress, with an expression of tragic despair. It was not that she sorrowed for her father more deeply than her sisters, but it was Theo's nature to revel in emotion, and deliberately to work herself up to the height of rejoicing, or down to the depths of despair. She was a tall, graceful girl, with a face which was decidedly interesting if not regularly pretty, and her broad forehead and deep-set eyes seemed to portray a greater brain power than that possessed by the rest of the family. Theo had written stories for her own amusement since the age of ten, and was even now engaged upon a full-fledged novel, with which she hoped to burst upon an astonished world. It seemed a horrible, ghoul-like proceeding to examine her own feelings in order to be able to depict what Veronica, her heroine, should feel in the hour of her desolation, and she was disgusted with herself because, despite all resolutions, she had been mentally taking notes during the whole of the past week. Now, as she sat unpicking the pretty pink lining, and casting it ruthlessly on one side, her busy brain was weaving a simile by which it appeared that all the brightness of life was left behind, and nothing remained but blackness and desolation.

By Philippa's side—adviser, assistant, and architect-in-chief—stood golden-haired Hope, sweet as her name, and all unselfish anxiety for the good of others. Her white forehead was wrinkled with the strain of trying to induce two yards of silk to do duty for three, and she stood at attention, staring down at the pattern spread over the black folds, and rubbing her chin in solemn calculation, as she discussed the knotty point.

"... If I were to make the yoke of something else, and let the silk come from the arm-holes only. . . . do you think we could manage it

then? There is some of that old black velvet that could be used for the yoke, and it could be made to look very nice. I am afraid we couldn't match this silk, even if we tried."

"Don't want to try!" said Philippa, shortly. "Spent quite enough as it is. Well, we shall either have to do it that way, or make the sleeves of another material to match the skirt. Theo! it's for you. Which would you rather have?"

"Don't care at all. Make it as you please. I take no interest in the matter!" replied Theo, turning her head elaborately in an opposite direction, and speaking in a tone of implied rebuke which brought a flash into Philippa's eyes.

"Then you ought to take an interest! How are we to get on if no one will say what she wants? We want to do our best for you, and it's not much trouble just to say what you like, and help us to decide."

Theo looked round at that, and lo, her eyes were full of tears!

"I think it's hateful to think of clothes at all!" she cried passionately. "How does it matter *how* they are made? Make me a sack if you like. . . . It will make no difference to me!"

"Yes, dear, it will; you are mistaken there! We shall have to wear these things for a long time, and the day will come when it would worry you very much to wear what you did not like. I know you feel no interest just now, but it would be really unselfish to rouse yourself enough to consider the question, and help us with our work," said Hope, the peacemaker, speaking just in time to stop Philippa's sharp retort, and so avert the threatened storm. Theo, the emotional, was always ready to be swayed by a soft word; besides, she adored Hope, and was especially sensitive to her wishes. So the black skirt was dropped to the floor, and she came forward obediently to discuss the important question of sleeves versus yokes. It was wonderful how particular she was when once her attention was aroused, and what precise instructions she had to give concerning shape and size. Madge dropped her chin until it looked longer than ever, and exchanged a sly glance with Philippa, for if the two middle girls paired together, the eldest and youngest had a wonderful sympathy of feeling, and rarely failed to understand an unspoken message.

"Very well, then, *that's* settled!" said Theo, in conclusion, "and when it is done you needn't trouble to make anything more for me, for if there is any chance of going to London before winter, I would rather wait, and get what I want when we can shop in comfort. Did you see

"'I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THESE GIRLS MUST BE LIKE,' SAID MRS. LOFTUS. 'SOCIAL SAVAGES, I SHOULD SAY!'"—(*p.* 556.)

Mr. Mathews to-day, Stephen, and tell him that this house might be to let at Michaelmas?"

Poor Stephen! He quaked behind his newspaper, knowing that his hour had come. "No-o, not to-day!" he said, feebly, and then Madge must needs fall upon him in her turn, and cry, "Oh, Steve, how foolish! We told you he was looking at the Masons' house last week, and if you put off seeing him he may take it before he knows there is a chance of getting this. You really must go to-morrow! If we let him slip, goodness knows when we may find another tenant."

Stephen put down the newspaper and braced himself for the fray. After all he was the eldest of the family, the man and master, and it was cowardice to shrink from what a girl might say!

"I can't see him to-morrow, for I shall be otherwise engaged. I have had a letter from Uncle Loftus to say that he and Aunt Gertrude are coming down to-morrow to talk over arrangements with us, and give us their advice as to the future. When I wrote to them last week I said I should be grateful if they would help us in this way, and it is good of them to come so far on our account. Uncle writes most kindly. He seems really interested. I think we have misjudged him in the past. At any rate, his wife was father's nearest relative, and it seemed right that they should be consulted."

Silence. The three girls looked fearfully at Philippa, and Philippa studied her pattern with an air of elaborate carelessness, making dainty snicks at the silk with the cutting-out scissors.

"And for how long, may I ask, have you invited them to stay? It may be necessary to make a few preparations, and as the house is hardly in a state to receive visitors, we had better begin at once."

"They are not coming here; they are to put up at the Inn. Now, Phil, come; don't take it like that! Honestly, I never intended to do anything behind your back. I was so worried and puzzled when I wrote, that I said on the impulse of the moment that I wished they would give us their help. I did not tell you about it, for to tell the truth, I never expected that they would come. Surely you feel, as I do, that we are ignorant and inexperienced, and would be the better for advice from people who know the world! You are a sensible girl. . I am sure you agree!"

"I don't think it is a question of understanding the world, so much as understanding US, and our circumstances!" said Philippa, standing up suddenly, and facing him with kindling eyes. She seemed about to add something sharp and stinging, but controlled herself with a visible effort, and said quietly: "You should not have done this without consulting me, Steve. If we have to work together, there must be confidence between us. But let that pass. I don't want to make unnecessary difficulties. We have enough as it is, goodness knows! I should welcome any advice that came from a reliable source, but the Loftus connection have shown so plainly of late years that they wished to have nothing to do with us, that I can't say their opinion will have any weight with me. They are selfish, worldly creatures, who only think of their own convenience."

"Even so, my dear, they may be useful to us. Worldly wisdom is an ingredient which has been conspicuous by its absence in our family up till now. It is time we made a reform," said Steve, with a tinge of bitterness in his voice, for it is a heavy burden for a young fellow of twenty-five to find himself saddled with the responsibility of an impecunious young family, and it was difficult to subdue a feeling of resentment as he remembered the careless *régime* of the past. "When it comes to the final decision, you and I must give the casting votes, but it would be an ease to my mind, at least, if a man of the world like Uncle Loftus approved of what we were going to do. Come now, Phil, it would to you, too! If the worst came to the worst, and our venture proved a failure, it would be a comfort to you to feel that you had not acted alone!"

"I don't think anything could comfort me, then!" said Philippa, sadly. She leant against the table, and snapped unconsciously at the air with the scissors. "If it will be any satisfaction to you, Steve, I am glad that they are coming, but honestly, they won't alter my decision. I have thought and thought until my brain feels like a jelly, but there seems no way out of the tangle but the one we propose. If Uncle Loftus tries to dissuade me, I shall be obliged to tell him that in this matter I consider my own judgment better than his. How can he decide what is best for us? What does he know of our characters and possibilities? We are not like other families. We may be less amiable and worthy in many respects, but we *are* cleverer! It isn't conceited to say so, for it's true. We have inherited father's gifts, and ought to be able to do something with our lives. Other girls might be content to stodge along and never see anything of the world, and teach the doctor's children, and marry the curates, and be as poor as Job all their lives, but——"

"'But that's not me nor you'!" quoted Madge, vigorously, stopping the machine with the usual

jar and snap, and tossing her determined chin with an air of defiance. "I won't stodge for anyone. If fifty aunts and a hundred uncles came and sat in rows round the room, and besought me to be a good little girl and stay where I was, I'd snap my fingers in their faces, and tell them that I had to live my own life, and I'd take jolly good care that I lived it my own way!"

"Madge!"

"Sorry! Didn't mean to interfere. Thought you might like to know my sentiments—that's all. Keep me out of the room when the Loftuses are here if you don't wish them to hear home truths. I don't mince my words when I'm roused, as some of you know to your cost. I'll shake hands with them when they come, and say good-bye when they go, and they will say to each other, as they drive away, 'Plain, heavy-looking girl, that youngest! They will never be able to do anything with her.' Ha-ha!" and Madge laughed in a mocking, derisive fashion, which brought an answering flicker of amusement to the anxious faces of her companions. It was evident that she fully expected an hour to come when her relatives would be stupefied to discover the genius of the age in the "plain, heavy-looking girl" whom they had despised, and it said volumes for her attainments that the prospect seemed within range of possibility to more than one of her audience.

Theo, however, had an objection to make. "I think you are very foolish if you do anything of the kind," she said, severely. "We ought to make the best of ourselves, not the worst, if we want them to agree to our plan. They know that we are poor, and have lived in the country all our lives, and I suppose they imagine that we are great, awkward, clownish creatures, who know nothing about society, or how things should be done. I vote we surprise them! Let's put on all our nicest things, and make the house look its very, very best, and prepare a *chic* little lunch, and give them coffee afterwards, and let them see that we don't require any patronage, and are quite able to take care of ourselves. I'm sure that's the best plan, isn't it, Phil?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Go your own ways. You want to appear better than you are, Madge wants to appear worse, I'm going to be myself, horribly myself! I don't feel that I can pretend one bit. It's all very well for you—you are only standing on the ramparts. I have to go down and fight the battle!" cried poor Philippa, dismally. Hope's arm stole round her waist, with a close, encouraging pressure. She was so sorry for everyone in turns, that she had no time to be sorry for herself. "It will soon be over!" she whispered, fondly. "Cheer up, Phil! By this time to-morrow they will have come and gone!"

CHAPTER III.

MR. and Mrs. Loftus arrived by the morning train, and drove up to The Cottage in the ancient village fly. Uncle Edward wore a black band round his hat; Aunt Gertrude an elaborately trimmed black gown, which had obviously *not* been bought for mourning. They stared curiously at the house as they approached, and from behind the blind in the front bedroom four pairs of eyes stared even more curiously at them.

"Thin lips and a sharp nose! Face like a hatchet. No love lost between *us*, my dear!" said Madge, shrewdly. "Nice old fellow—Uncle Edward! Looks as if he would be kind, if he had the chance."

"Isn't she smart? She has taken the flowers out of an ordinary bonnet to make us think she is in mourning. I could swear there were pink roses where that bow is now," said Theo, of the sharp eyes, the while she glanced complacently at her own careful toilette. "I am glad I dressed up the drawing-room. Don't hurry down, Phil. Let them have time to look round, and realise that we don't live in a hovel!"

"I suppose I ought to fly to meet them at the door, but I don't feel in the least inclined. . . . Now Steve is going out. . . . He looks so nervous. . . . I expect he wishes that he had not written. . . . Do you think Aunt Gertrude looks more determined than I do? I expect we shall have an awful battle. You must come down with me, girls, and be introduced before we begin. I wish my heart wouldn't thud! I don't want to give myself away by looking nervous!"

Then came a quick review before the glass, a creeping down stairs, and the entrance of four girls, one after the other, to greet the unknown relatives as they stood in the middle of the low, sunny-windowed drawing-room. Mrs. Loftus put up her *pince-nez* and stared at each in turn—Philippa, stately and dignified, pretty, soft-eyed Hope, Theo, with her air of distinction and clever interesting face, Madge, of the long, sagacious chin, and quick, light movements—and even as she looked, she realised that these were no non-entities, but young women who would insist upon having a definite vote in the matter of their own destiny. They sat down and talked company talk, the little handmaid appeared and offered light refreshments to the travellers, Uncle Loftus made complimentary remarks, and everything

was most proper and orthodox—just like a scene in a book, until presently Stephen began to fidget and glance at the clock, and Philippa looked at her Uncle, and said: "Shall we have our talk, now? The girls will leave us alone for an hour, and Stephen will tell you exactly what our position is, and what we are thinking of doing."

"Perhaps it would be as well. I am feeling so tired after the journey that I should like to go to bed early this evening, and have ordered dinner at the Inn at seven o'clock. I hope that is convenient to you. I didn't know what your arrangements might be, or whether it would be convenient to have us here."

"Whichever you prefer. We hoped you would spend the evening with us, but I can quite understand that you must be tired," said Philippa, resolutely avoiding meeting Theo's eye, lest she should be obliged to smile at the thought of the wasted culinary efforts over which that poor victim had been groaning the whole of the morning. Then the door closed, the two men automatically moved their chairs nearer the table, and Steve nervously began his story.

"You know, of course, that my father was in bad health for some years before he died. His work was of the kind which was peculiarly dependent on health and spirits, for he had the artistic temperament, and could do nothing to order. He was in chronic low spirits, and had not the energy to compose. In former years he made a very fair income, though, of course, it was always uncertain, and he could never tell from month to month what would come in. Sometimes he made a hit, and one or two of his songs bring in a fair royalty still. He was able to save a little now and again, but the last two years he was constantly having to draw on his capital, and we find that there is practically none left. There is, however, an insurance which is intact. It seems that on his marriage my mother's people insisted on this as a provision for her in the event of his death, and as the premiums were paid up some years ago, it has not lapsed. It amounts to two thousand pounds, and is left to Philippa and myself in trust for the family, with full discretion to use it as seems best to us, for their benefit and advancement in life. There are six of us altogether. My brother Barnard is still at school, but we have given notice for him to leave at the end of the term, as he is sixteen, and must begin to work for himself. Two thousand pounds is not a large provision for six people!"

Mrs. Loftus drew in her lips and stared fixedly at a corner of the ceiling; her husband drummed upon the table, and looked unaffectedly distressed.

"So bad as that! Tut-tut! Sorry to hear it, sorry, indeed. And this house?—you have made it very pretty—charming little bijou residence—is the house your own?"

"No. We have it at a very low rental in consideration of the improvements which father made from time to time; but it is not our own. We think we should have no difficulty in letting it, for, as you say, it is pretty in its way. In fact, we know of a possible tenant already, and I think it quite likely that he may take the lease from us at Michaelmas, if we decide to move."

There was a rustle of silken skirts as Mrs. Loftus sat upright in her chair, and gave a short, preliminary cough before entering into the conversation.

"But if you get it cheaply, why should you move at all? I think it would be a fatal mistake. Living must be very cheap in this out-of-the-world place, and you have a garden, I see, which must keep you supplied with vegetables. If you kept fowls you might sell the eggs, and make a little extra money in that way. Quite a number of people go in for poultry farming in these days. There is nothing *infra dig* about it. I was saying to your uncle, as we came down, that it was quite likely that you could get paying guests if you went to work in the right way. Many people prefer living in the country in summer-time, and you could quote reasonable terms. Then there must surely be some teaching to be found in the neighbourhood, which would employ the girls who were not needed at home. Really, I think with a hundred a year assured, besides what you earn—you are in a solicitor's office, I believe, Stephen—you might get along very comfortably."

Philippa's eyes flashed, but her lips twitched at the same time, for it was too absurd to hear a stranger settling the destinies of a family in this swift, casual fashion; she dared not meet Stephen's eye, and even Mr. Loftus seemed conscious of something wrong, for he said, testily:

"Not so quick, my dear; not so quick, if you please! We have not heard what plans Stephen and Philippa have made for themselves. I should like to hear your own ideas—for, of course, you must have thought over the matter from all points of view. Let us hear what are your plans!"

The brother and sister looked at one another, and there was a dead silence. Stephen was afraid to speak. Philippa was anxious not to monopolise the *rôle* of leader. She waited a full moment, but when she began there was no hesitation in her voice.

"We intend to go up to London to seek our fortunes! I agree with Aunt Gertrude that if we stayed here we should be able to earn enough money to provide us with bread and butter, and for the time being it would be the easier course. But we don't want to think of the present only, we want to provide for the future. I believe, and Stephen agrees with me, that if we settle here now it will practically mean vegetating for the rest of our lives. He will remain in the same sleepy office, where if he worked for twenty years he could never gain more than a few miserable hundreds a year. Barney would come home and go into the Bank. There is no other place to put him, and he is too lively and high-spirited a boy to trust by himself in a big town. Then there are the girls—they are all clever, and father was very particular about their training. He realised that he himself had made a mistake in trying too many things at once, so he made them choose one hobby, and stick to that alone. Hope is musical. She plays charmingly, can read music as easily as a book, and has already had one song published. She ought to study harmony under a clever master, and hear plenty of really good music. Father said that that was what she wanted most of all—to hear good music. She has gone through the drudgery; what she needs now is confidence and style. It is impossible to give it to her here. . . . Theo wishes to write. She is always scribbling, and father thought she would do well some day. There are one or two editors in London who knew him, and who would take an interest in her for his sake. She has a narrow life here, with very few friends. It would be the best training for her to have more varied experience. . . . Madge is an artist. It is her ambition in life to go to a studio, and work hard. She is very original, and has already quite a distinctive style of her own. Father was very proud of her, and used to say she was the cleverest of the family. Now that he is gone there is no one within miles who can help her with her work. It seems to me a very sad thing to turn these girls into governesses and household drudges when they have real gifts to cultivate."

"THE FOUR SISTERS MADE AN INTERESTING GROUP, AS THEY BUSIED THEMSELVES WITH THE SEWING IN HAND."—(*p.* 558.)

"Quite so, quite so. I can understand your feelings; but you mustn't be angry with me, my dear, if I say that you must allow some discount for sisterly partiality! You think your sisters geniuses, but whether the public will agree with you is a very different question." Uncle Loftus was beginning to feel vaguely uncomfortable, and to scent a coming request for a loan of money to be repaid at that indefinite period when the aforesaid geniuses would be recognised by the world. He was a good-natured man, and was quite ready to help these pretty, attractive nieces by an occa-

sional present of a dress, or a five pound note; but his recollection of school bills paid for his own daughter made him shrink from the prospect of finishing the education of three ambitious and aspiring young women. "Music and pictures are at a discount in these hard times, and half the artists, by their own account, are starving. A poor fellow brought me a couple of water-colours only last month. Wanted fifteen pounds for them, but was thankful to take five. Very good pictures, too! I don't pretend to understand these things, but they look very well in my smoke-room. As for story-writing—there are half-a-dozen stars who make a fortune in literature, but the vast majority of authors have a hard fight to earn a living. Many of them fail altogether, and throw it up in despair, like that poor poet fellow—Chatterton, wasn't it? I never can remember names. Women aren't made to fight their way, especially country girls as you are, who have no idea of life in a great world like London. Depend upon it, my dear, you would be far happier and safer where you are."

"For the present—yes! I said so myself. If we go to town we shall have a hard fight for the first few years; but we have faith to believe that we should succeed in the end, and we would rather fight our battles while we are young. If *you* were beginning life, Uncle Loftus, would you be content to settle down to life-long obscurity and poverty, or would you feel that, come what might, you would go down into the arena, and try to win a crown for yourself!"

Philippa threw back her head and looked at him with challenging eyes. So young, so brave, so ignorant, poor child, of the real meaning of the fight which lay before her—what wonder that the man's heart softened, and that he laid his hand on hers with a quick movement of sympathy. Mrs. Loftus spied the movement with her cold, blue eyes, and hastened to turn on the tap of cold, common sense.

"Perhaps you will kindly tell us in plain words exactly what it is that you intend to do! Your ideas sound very charming and romantic, but I do not understand how they are to be carried out. Education is a costly business, and the duty before you seems rather to save than to spend. . . How can you reconcile the need of earning money with the programme which you have drawn out?"

"I don't try," said Philippa, boldly. "I know it is impossible. You will think our scheme very daring, Aunt Gertrude; but in plain words, it is this—To take a flat in town in as central a position as we can afford; and to invest our capital in apprenticing Barney to a firm where he would have a chance of getting on, and in giving the girls the lessons and opportunities which they require. We know quite well that we could not possibly do this on our tiny income, but we believe that it is the wisest thing that we can do, and that the time will come when we shall be thankful that we had the courage to do it. T-that's all! That's our scheme!" faltered Philippa, feeling that she had launched a bomb-shell, indeed, as her uncle fell back in his chair, overcome with amazement, and her aunt raised protesting eyes to the ceiling, as though calling Heaven to witness that she was no party to this mad folly.

"And—er—Stephen would, of course, give up his situation? He would—er—hope to find more lucrative employment in London?" she inquired, with a thinly-veiled satire which roused the head of the family to dignified response.

"I have every reason to do so. In that respect, at least, we should not be reckoning in the dark, Aunt Gertrude. The solicitor's office here is but a small branch of an important one in the city, and my chief has been anxious for some time that I should remove to the head office. He realised that there was no promotion for me here, and has been a most kind friend—anxious to help us in every way. So far I have refused to move, for I like a country life, and——"

"He doesn't like it a bit. He longs to go to town, but he stayed with us because he knew we couldn't do without him!" cried Philippa, with a loving glance, at which Steve flushed, and darkly scowled an order to be silent. Mr. Loftus thought the by-play very pretty and creditable to both the actors, but his business instinct had been shocked, and he felt it his duty to protest.

"Spend your capital! Break in on your capital! My dear girl, that is against all laws of prudence and business. I really—as you have asked my advice—I really could not sanction such a step as that. Your income, taking everything together, will not amount to over three hundred a year, I suppose? No! I thought not. Well, then, remember that you would have to pay a high London rent, to feed and clothe six people, exclusive of a servant; to pay coals, and gas, and constant travelling to and fro, and a hundred extra expenses, before you begin to think of lessons, and concert-going, and payment of premiums. It would cost you at least twice as much, and I doubt if you could do it on that. Consider what you are doing! It is a risk which I could never sanction—a big risk, a serious risk!"

"I believe in risks!" cried Philippa gallantly. "There is a tide in the affairs of men . . . Risk—deliberate, thoughtful risk, is only another name for courage, and enterprise, and faith! What would become of the world if no one was willing to take a risk? What battle would be won if soldiers did not risk everything—health, limbs, life itself—to overcome the enemy? We know it is a risk; we have faced it with our eyes open; but we feel it is the right thing to do. . . it is our chance; we ought to take it! We are not acting thoughtlessly or lightly; we mean to work hard, and ask God to help us, and give us strength not to be discouraged——"

"We are not going to squander our capital, uncle, we are going to *invest* it! Surely if you equip six people with the means of getting on in the world, it will be a better return for money than a wretched three-and-a-half per cent. We mean to practise every possible economy in food, and dress, and amusements, and to be extravagant in this one way only: The girls shall have no second-rate masters; Barney shall have a good start. They realise the responsibility which we are taking upon ourselves, and are prepared to work hard and shorten the period of probation as much as possible!"

"Yes, yes, of course! Young things are always eager for change, and are ready to promise anything in advance; but suppose they *don't* make their way? Suppose your scheme is a failure? The money is left to you and to Philippa to spend as you think wise, for the good of the family, so that legally there would be no claim upon you for what was gone. But you might find yourself in a most unpleasant position all the same. If you spend it all within the next few years, Barnard may think himself ill-used when he grows up, and feels the need of a few hundred pounds. The girls may want a trifle to buy a trousseau, or help in other ways, and may blame you for influencing them when they were too young to know their own minds. Do you ever think, my dears, of what would happen if your scheme were to fail?"

Poor Philippa! How many scores—nay, hundreds of times—had the nightmare seized her in its grip! How often had she lain awake shuddering with dread, seeing the workhouse loom large before her? She shivered, even now, and clasped her hands together beneath the tablecloth, but she showed a brave face to the enemy, and refused to be cast-down in his presence.

"It is no use beginning a fight with the expectation of being beaten, Uncle! I should have no courage left if I did that. I have enough faith in my brothers and sisters to believe that they

"MR. AND MRS. LOFTUS ARRIVED BY THE MORNING TRAIN."—(*p.* 561.)

will not reproach us, whatever happens, and at the worst, we could come back again and try your plan in the country. We are strong and capable, and could always earn enough to live on, even if we had to separate and go out as cooks and housemaids. I am not in the least afraid of starving. We will manage to keep ourselves without either asking or expecting help from outsiders."

"Come, come, my dear, there is such a thing as being too independent! What is the use of relations if they can't help each other at a pinch? If you are really determined to try this scheme, we must help you all we can. You must come to see us when we are in town, and we may be able to give you useful introductions. Avice will be pleased to make your acquaintance, and so shall we all. We must do what we can for Edgar's children, mustn't we, Mamma?"

"I cannot promise anything which would be an encouragement to what appears to me a piece of preposterous folly," said Mrs. Loftus, coldly. "It is flying in the face of Providence to leave a comfortable home and deliberately court danger. With your inexperience you will be ruined before a year is over, and who is to pay your debts I don't know. . . You can't expect any help from us if you act in defiance of our wishes. If you had already made up your minds, as appears to be the case, I must say it was very inconsiderate to inflict this long journey upon your Uncle and myself, for the mere farce of asking our opinion. We had better get back to the hotel now, Edward! I am tired, and shall be glad of a rest."

Mr. Loftus rose obediently, and followed his wife's lead to the door, but on his way he managed to whisper a few conciliatory words into Philippa's burning ear.

"Take no notice, my dear—no notice! Your aunt is hasty, but she will come round. I will see you again this evening, when she has gone to bed, and to-morrow we will both come up again before we leave. Can't approve, you know, can't approve; but you are a brave girl. You mean well. Wish you good luck!"

Philippa's dark eyes swept over him with an expression of magnanimous superiority.

"Poor little downtrodden, trembling worm!" she was saying to herself, "afraid to assert yourself, and be your natural self for fear of what a woman might say! Oh, if I were a man! Oh, if I were your husband, my dear! *I*'d teach you manners—I'd keep you in order; I'd tell you straight out what I thought of you." Then, aloud: "*Good* afternoon, Aunt Gertrude! Mind the doorstep. So awkward! *Hope* you will not be too tired. *Good*-bye!"

The door closed, and brother and sister drew back and gazed at one another with bright, excited eyes. "Well?" queried one. "Well!" answered the other, and then came the rush of feet on the floor, and down hurried the girls, one after the other, questioning, staring, agape with curiosity.

"Well—well—well—what did they say? Were they furious? Were they amiable? Did you stick to your point? Are they coming again? What is decided? Tell us quickly! Tell us at once!"

"It is quite decided!" said Stephen, gravely. "We are going to London." He put his arm round his sister's waist, and looked down at her with admiration. "Phil, you were glorious! You convinced *me*, at least, if you failed with them. My last lingering doubt has disappeared. I'll begin preparations this very day!"

"Here endeth the first volume!" chanted Madge, shrilly. "Now for excitement—now for romance—now for the third volume, with all its honour and glory!"

But Philippa shivered, and was silent. The moment of reaction had come, and in her heart she said: "But the second volume lies between, and in the second volume are all the trials and difficulties . . . Oh, it may be a long, long fight before we get to the happy ending!"

CHAPTER IV.

TWO months later the plunge was taken. The Charrington family said good-bye to their picturesque country home, and established themselves in the top flat of a massive red building in the picturesque district of the Tottenham Court Road. With one exception the rooms were small; there was no passage to speak of, the coal-cellar was in pleasing proximity to the drawing-room door, the view consisted of a forest of chimney stacks, and the air was thick with smuts. When Philippa made her first survey of the premises she felt that she was indeed coming down in the world, but when she heard the rent demanded she changed her mind and that with a shock of surprise. It was preposterous! Incredible! The price of a palace, rather than of an ugly, sooty tenement, midway between earth and sky! For that price in the country one could have a tennis lawn, and a stable, and a pretty flower and vegetable garden, to say nothing of a roomy and comfortable house! Off went Miss Charrington, with her head in the air, but two long days of search brought

her to the sad conviction that she would have to change her attitude with regard to London prices, and that the agent had been right in speaking of the flat as unusually cheap. She did not dare to take it, however, without a family consultation, so secured the option for a couple of days, and went home with the story of her wanderings. The girls howled in unison at the mention of the rent, but, like their sister, were obliged to come round to the conclusion that the money must be paid.

"It is really and truly the best thing I could find in a central position," said Philippa, sadly. "The question is—ought we to give up the idea of living in town, and take a little house in the suburbs? If we went out in an unfashionable direction, we could get one for half the cost. I asked the agent, and he said there were any number to be had. They run them up in a few months—rows and rows of them—quite nice, compact little houses, with all modern conveniences. . . ."

"I know! Thank you. I've seen them from the train. Hundreds of them, exactly alike, with sunflowers in the front garden, and the washing in the back, and such nice, sociable neighbours over the palings!"

"It's all very well, Theo, but can we afford to be snobbish? We shall have to pocket our pride, and save every penny piece that is possible! If the house would be cheaper——"

"I'm not so sure that it would. It is different for a man and his wife. But you must remember that we should have four, perhaps five railway contracts to add to the rent. Our great object is to be near our work, and we might almost as well stay where we are, as bury ourselves in an out-of-the-way suburb. If we go to the flat, Madge will be almost next door to the Slade School, the boys can come home for lunch, and Hope and I will be near libraries and concerts, and have some chance of picking up odd pieces of work. Suppose I go in for journalism? How am I to be in the hum of things when I live a dozen miles away, and have probably a bad service of trains?"

"Suppose I get accompanying to do at concerts? I am going to call on some of the lady professionals who sing father's songs, and ask them to give me a chance. I shall have to get used to going about by myself at night, but it would be nice to be in a central position, and not have *too* far to go," said Hope wistfully, and her eldest sister, looking at her golden locks and sweet pink-and-white face, came to a sudden determination.

"We will take the flat! It's no use doing things by halves. We must hope to save the money in travelling expenses and lunches. I will write to the agent, and settle it to-night."

So the flat was taken, and the question of furniture was the next to come upon the *tapis*. For the larger articles there could be no accommodation—they must be sold for what they would bring; but even without them there were an incredible number of possessions with which it seemed impossible to part. Curtains were faded, carpets so darned and mended as to be incapable of removal, but Edgar Charrington had been picking up artistic treasures all his life, and the rooms were crowded with quaint, old-world furniture. There was a Chinese cabinet, shaped like a pagoda, with coloured Chinese figures standing in the niches. It would take up more room than could be spared, but who could bear to part from it, remembering the fascination of those figures to the infant mind, the later joy of turning over the contents of the daintily-fitting drawers, and sniffing the sweet, musty odour! There was an oak-bound picture of a church, with a real clock fitted into the steeple. A place for that must be found somewhere, or life would be robbed of one of its oldest associations. There was a black silhouette picture of great, great Aunt Martha, riding on a pillion, and another of Grandfather and Grandmother Charrington, with a family of six little Charringtons, clad in *decolletè* dresses, spencers, and pantaloons. What Goth or Vandal could find it in his heart to part from them? There was a collection of old china, of pewter, of old beaten silver, and such stacks of pictures, framed and unframed, as were quite alarming to count.

"What shall we do with them? Shall we pack half away in chests, and ask the Vicar to store them in his loft? He would be only too glad to keep them for us. It seems absurd to take such a collection. The place will look like a museum!" cried Philippa in despair, but the idea seemed to commend itself rather than otherwise to her ambitious young sisters.

"Just what it ought to look, as a temple of the Muses. No use pretending to be artistic against a commonplace background. Let us make our rooms as striking, and unusual, and 'ancestory' as we can. I hate a house that looks as if it had been furnished yesterday. When people come to call, they will have a pretty good idea of what we are, by looking round our rooms."

"But who is to come, you dear little snob? We know nobody. I'm afraid the arrival of the Charrington family won't make much stir in the great metropolis. I can tell you I felt a lone, lorn

creature, walking about those crowded streets, and thinking that not a single soul knew me, or cared whether I lived or died. As for Aunt Loftus, she may come once, perhaps, to pay a formal call; but we shan't be troubled with her after that, and I should be sorry to count upon uncle's promised introductions. We shall be left severely to ourselves."

"I am going up to London to know, and be known; and I am not going to be left alone for anybody," said Madge, tossing her head with a consequential air. "Seclusion may suit some people, but not this child. I'm going to make friends, and have a real good time. I think I shall start a Salon like that Madame de Thingummy in Paris, and make our house the resort of all the learned and celebrated people of the day. I've read about her in magazines, and it sounds quite easy. You don't need to be pretty, or rich, or to live in a big house; all you have to do is to announce that you are at home on certain evenings, and give cups of coffee, and be very vivacious, and talk, and make people laugh. *You* can give the coffee, and I'll talk! There's never any difficulty in that. . . the trouble is to be quiet. Wait until you see Cabinet Ministers, and Presidents of the Academy, and celebrated authors all driving up to our door, and toiling up hundreds of steps on purpose to enjoy the fascinations of my society!"

"Very well. I'll wait. It will be a good exercise for my patience. For my own part, I have resigned myself to single blessedness, staying at home cooking dinners, and darning stockings, while you are out making your fortunes. I shall be too busy to be lonely, and if you earn money, I shall save it. We can't *all* be fascinating society leaders!" said Philippa, cruelly. She was so devoted to Madge, so tempted to applaud all that she said and did, that as a pure matter of conscience she felt bound to snub her now and then, just to show her impartiality! It had very little effect, however, for Miss Madge was too sharp not to see through the pretence, and refused to be in the least impressed by her strictures.

What a comfort the girl was in the weeks which followed, when the burden of responsibility seemed to weigh ever more and more heavily on the shoulders of the two young heads of the family! Hope was always ready with sympathy, Theo with dramatic invections against the cruelty of fate, but Madge met difficulties with a laugh and a jest, and the sound thereof was as sunshine in the house. In some respects fortune favoured the adventurers at the start, for Stephen's firm made no difficulty about his removal, and Mr. Mathews snapped at the offer of the house, and even promised to buy the fixtures "at a valuation." But here the disappointments began! Philippa instantly made a valuation on her own account, and added generously to the total in consideration of those manifold odds and ends which accumulate in households of thirty years' standing, but are hardly worth the cost of cartage to pastures new. Oddments of glass and china, of tin, and iron, and earthenware; mouldy volumes which no one will read, chairs minus a leg, rusty fireirons, and damaged ornaments.

"With a little glue and patching you might make good things of them yet. Five pounds, at the least—no! say seven pounds! Seven pounds added to forty-five?—over fifty pounds in all. That ought to pay for the removal, and leave something over for carpets and blinds. Thank goodness, I can mark *that* expense off the list!" sighed Philippa.

But alas for the frailty of human hopes! The valuer's estimate came to exactly a third of the sum expected, while one and all the dealers refused to bid for the valuable collection of antiquities, so that in the end a cart had to be hired to convey the whole to the village school-room, to take part in a coming rummage sale!

Scarcely had poor Philippa recovered from this blow than the estimate from the furniture remover arrived to cast her down once more. She screamed aloud when her eye lighted on the horrible total; but what could one do? The things must be moved, and the firm in question had been recommended in virtue of its economy. It was appalling to think of the inroads into capital which would be made before the real life in town could begin, and Philippa needed all her courage when the hour came to say good-bye to the old home, and to go forth to prepare the flat for its inmates. Madge was to accompany her as a matter of course. It had been so certain that she would be chosen as helper that the matter was not even discussed. Hope and Theo took refuge at the Vicarage, Steve with a bachelor friend, Barney was to remain at school until the half term, and no one was to approach the flat until preparations were finished, and the artistic beauty of the whole ready to burst upon their enraptured sight. This was Madge's decree. Philippa thought of the chimney-pots, and the soot, and the narrow passages, and the weary flight of stairs, coldly clean, with bottles of fire extinguisher ranged on the wall at the landing, to remind the dwellers on the top story of the peril in which they lived! She thought of the narrow,

begrimed windows, the cheap fireplaces, and the saffron paper in the sitting-room, and felt it her painful duty to undeceive the young enthusiast lest the blow might fall too heavily upon her. But Madge refused to be cast down, and went through the ordeal of the first inspection with an undaunted smile.

"My hat!" she exclaimed, as she peered out of the first window, and beheld the roofscape in all the beauty of a drizzling autumn rain; and though the expression was neither ladylike nor elegant, nor in the least degree appropriate, it yet had a quaint, whimsical sound which made Philippa laugh, and draw a breath of relief.

"Yes! I told you so. I didn't exaggerate, you see. Cheerful and comprehensive, isn't it? This is the dining-room. . . not much room to spare when you have the table in the middle. I don't know if we can get it in at all."

"If we can't we'll dine at small tables like a restaurant. Far more *chic*. Not a bad little den, when it is dressed up. Jolly cosy in winter. When summer comes I shall live up on the leads, and make a roof garden. Is there any way out?"

"PHILIPPA MADE HER FIRST SURVEY OF THE PREMISES."—(*p.* 566.)

"Don't know, I'm sure. Come and look at the bedrooms. We can have first choice, I suppose, as I'm the eldest; but if you don't mind, I'd like the girls to be at the front. You could hardly imagine that the one at the side could be smaller and more dreary, but it is, and Theo would be so wretched! Do you think we could possibly get our things in here?"

Madge stood prospecting the small square box with a ruminating gaze. "Bed there—dressing-table there—washstand there—chest of. . . No! can't be done. We shall have to do without a dressing-table, and use the top of the bureau. We can manage all right that way, but you will always have to get up first, and make way for me while I have my last little snooze. It will be good practice for our tempers, for we really daren't quarrel in such very close quarters. Let's look at the sitting-room for a change. You said that was a decent size!"

"Oh, yes—quite, and a pretty shape, too! Don't you like the shape? Don't you think that rounded window is sweet in the corner? It would make a dear, quiet little nook if it were curtained off, wouldn't it, dear" cried the eldest sister, anxious to divert the artist's eyes from the saffron paper, with the aggressive roses and the gilded leaves, which were in such disastrous good order that the company "could not really be expected to replace it.

"Yes; I'll sit in there when I'm engaged, and let the cord go free! A very good room, with plenty of possibilities. Nothing square and stiff about it. That corner would do charmingly for the cabinet, and we will fit in shelves for the china in that funny little niche. We must keep the middle of the floor as clear as possible, for I shall want space for my receptions. . ." Then "Philippa Charrington! Do you mean to look me in the face and say that you are responsible for this paper?"

"No, no—of course not. The last tenant left it. I begged hard for another, but it was no use. Make the best of it, just now, there's a dear, and perhaps in a year or so we may get another!"

"We are going to have another before the week is out!" declared Madge; and when her sister protested: "Look here!" she said, sturdily, "let us come to a clear understanding. We made up our minds to make this move and to face the cost, and we are not going to spoil the house for the sake of a few pounds. Before we have done with putting things in order we shall have a dozen unexpected expenses. Things won't fit, and will

have to be altered; we shall have to buy little fixings, and have workmen in and out. If you are going to groan over every sixpence we shall have a dismal old time. Make up your mind to pay and be cheerful, since you've got to pay, whether you like it or not. About this wall paper! . . I suppose there are some families who could live in peace and happiness staring at yellow cabbages, but we are not one of them. We inherit artistic fastidiousness, and would hate them worse every day of our lives. When we can't afford to go out for amusements, isn't it our duty to make home as attractive as possible? When we shall spend a round hundred over the removal, is it worth while to spoil our best room for the sake of an extra sovereign?"

"You can't possibly——"

"Yes, I can. I can buy a self-coloured paper for next to nothing—a pretty soft blue, I think, to make a good background for the pictures—and hang it myself to save the expense of the workman. . ."

"You can't possibly——"

"Nonsense! I did my own room at home, and there's no matching about a plain paper. I could not face Theo with that atrocity on the walls, and besides—think of my Salon!"

"Oh, well! Have it your own way," Philippa cried, with affected disgust. It was impossible not to feel more interest in the room now that it could be imagined in its pretty new dress, and the discussion of how it should be arranged and decorated occupied an hour out of a dreary wait. The sisters had slept the night before at a boarding-house, and had hurried to the flat directly after breakfast so as to be ready to receive the furniture at ten o'clock as agreed. At eleven o'clock there was no sign of the vans; but no one expects furniture vans to be punctual within an hour or two, and until noon the girls managed to possess themselves in patience, and to find amusement in wandering from room to room. But when one o'clock drew near the matter became serious. They had brought a tea-basket with them, but there were no chairs on which to sit, no table to hold the cups and saucers. They were growing tired, and longing to get to work while daylight lasted to have a bed to sleep on before night fell. It was two o'clock before the first van arrived, and seven before the men departed, leaving the two young mistresses to thread their way between stacks of furniture, unopened crates, and boxes of luggage. There was no room for a servant to sleep in the flat, and the charwoman who was engaged to help could not come until the following day, so it was hopeless to try to do more than get the one bedroom in tolerable order. By Hope's forethought the necessary blankets and linen had been packed in one box and plainly labelled, so preparations were soon made, and by eight o'clock the tired workers were already longing for bed. Down stairs in the basement was a public dining-room where dinner could be obtained for a shilling a head; but they were too dishevelled and footsore to feel inclined to appear in public, so refreshed themselves, instead, with more tea, more cakes, more dried-up sandwiches. Philippa leant back in her chair, and sighed heavily as she looked first at her roughened hands, then at the hopeless disorder by which she was surrounded.

"I used to dream," she said slowly, "I used to dream of coming up to London! Father seemed so often on the eve of doing something great, and I used to imagine what it would be like if the book really turned out as he expected, or the picture made his name famous. He would have brought us to town, and we should have been rich, and everyone would have wanted to know us. . . ."

"I know! So have I. 'Beautiful Miss Charringtons—the rage of the London season.'. . that's the kind of thing, isn't it? I'm not beautiful, of course, but I'm vivacious—that's my point. I can "espiegle" fifty times better than Hope, though she is such a darling. You are very handsome, Phil, when you look pleasant, and Theo has the air of a princess in disguise. We are an interesting family. It seems hard lines that the world should not know us. We do seem slightly—just a little—what you might call "*cornered*" up here!"

"We do indeed. Oh, it is different, so different from what I expected!" faltered poor, tired Philippa with a sob, and then of a sudden her fears and dreads caught her in a grip, from which there was no escape. She looked round the strange unlovely room, through the bare window at the great city, lurid and threatening in the light of many lamps, and trembled at the thought of what she had done. She had been as a mother to these children, and she had brought them away from their safe, peaceful home to face a thousand trials, a thousand difficulties! Stephen, constitutionally despondent, to be burdened with fresh responsibilities; the girls, ardent and credulous, ready prey for unscrupulous acquaintances; Barney pining for mischief, and a chance of independence, to a swift and certain ruin! Her face blanched; she held out her hands to her sister with a gesture of terrified appeal.

"Madge, Madge, I'm frightened! Suppose it

is all a mistake! Suppose we fail, and all the money goes, and we are left penniless, and alone in this great wilderness. I have read of it so often—people come up hoping to make their fortunes, and the time passes, and they move into smaller and smaller rooms—and no work comes—and they fall ill. It was my doing. I persuaded Stephen. Oh, Madge, if it's all a mistake, you will believe I did it for the best, won't you? I was not thinking of myself. It would have been easier for me to stay where we were. You will not blame me if the money goes, and there is none left? Promise that you will never blame me?"

But Madge lay back in her chair, and folded her arms out of reach of the trembling hands.

"I will, though!" she replied, bluntly. "I'll make an awful row, and quite right, too; for it *will* be your fault! If you lose heart the very first night, and fall to crying and groaning, how do you expect to get on? If *you* get low in your mind, Steve will be indigo, and Hope and Theo have no spirit left in them. As for me, I'm not *going* to fail, nor fall ill, nor starve, nor throw myself over London Bridge, nor anything else interesting or melodramatic. I've always longed to come up to town, and now that I am here I am going to enjoy myself, in the best way I can. It is ripping to work hard when you feel you are getting on, and a little taste of success now and then will be a wonderful fillip. There must be some compensations for being poor, and I mean to find them out, and see if I can't get as much fun for sixpence as Avice Loftus does for ten shillings."

"I—I believe you will!" said Philippa, with a feeble laugh. "You mustn't think me a coward, Madge; I could be brave for myself; but it is the awful feeling of responsibility that weighs upon me. All this day I have been saying to myself:

'PHILIPPA HELD OUT HER HANDS WITH A GESTURE OF TERRIFIED APPEAL. 'MADGE, I'M FRIGHTENED! . . . SUPPOSE WE FAIL—'"

"Now we are here. . . What is the next step? What ought we to do next?"

"Go to bed, I should say! You look as if you needed it," came the curt interruption, and at that Philippa was obliged to laugh outright.

"Oh, Mr. Dick, Mr. Dick! Your common-sense is invaluable. Come along, then; let us go. We shall need all the rest we can get to prepare us for our hard work to-morrow."

(To be continued.)

CHILDREN OF THE GUILD OF PLAY IN ONE OF THEIR OLD-TIME GAMES.

A JOURNEY TO FAIRYLAND FROM THE SLUMS.

By GRACE COOKE.

Illustrated from photographs by Russell & Sons, *Wimbledon.*

Have you ever heard how many children there are in the great city of London, you fortunate young people who live in the country? More than five hundred thousand! Many are daintily dressed and nurtured, the children of the rich and well-to-do, but the majority, alas! are pitifully poor, children whose parents can scarcely provide food to put into the little mouths, whose homes are anything but places of luxury and comfort.

These boys and girls who are fortunate enough to live in tidy little houses in the broad and handsome streets of the better parts of London; who are watched over by a devoted and dear mother, with Nurse as an able lieutenant, know next to nothing of their poorer little sisters and brothers. How can they?

I wonder if any of you have even heard of Bermondsey? I am sure that few of you have ever been there. There is little or no pleasure there for children—or was not until a few years ago. Its little ones are born to toil and misery in the midst of dirt and turmoil and never-ceasing work. Most of the tiny mites earn their own living in some way or another, if it is only by "minding" a still tinier child for a neighbour; often they will work hard before and after school. To them home means two rooms, or perhaps only one; they are driven by the stress of circumstances to play in the streets; and their games are not all that can be desired. These poor, pale-faced little souls know no real play: their lives are so sordid and wanting in sunshine that they have often to be taught to play.

Now the Guild of Play exists in order to teach children how to be merry, and I am going to try and tell you of the happy hours the children spend in there. The Guild is trying to teach the children to lead a cleaner and better life, to take them out of the squalor and wickedness of the streets, from evil surroundings and hopeless neglect. The first step towards this end is to make the children happy, to bring a little laughter and sunshine into their dull, grey lives.

"If," writes Sister Grace, "the history of any great nation be looked into, we find that at the time of its greatness, education was regarded as a preparation for life in all its width

and depth, and among the important factors of that education we always find games and fairy tales."

The influence of games in the formation of character cannot be over-estimated. Through games a child learns to be good-natured, to control its temper, and to be generous. Games, too, encourage a feeling of fellowship and co-operation, and in the cultivation of this a child learns self-discipline, rapid judgment, and to bear defeat with courage, for consciously or unconsciously he becomes aware that either at games or in life, in order to win he must be master of himself. In other words, the children are trained to train themselves.

SISTER GRACE (MRS. KIMMINS) WITH THE BABY BOY OF THE SETTLEMENT IN HER ARMS.

Sister Grace has been the inspiration of the Guild since its start; to her it owes largely its success.

To Mrs. Kimmins—or Sister Grace, as the poor love to call her—the Guild owes its existence. Once a week the children gather together and spend the evening in play and rational amusement, dividing it between songs, games, and fairy tales. At every Guild of Play the children wear quaint pointed coifs, or caps, of various colours — blue, green, and scarlet. And what a joy there is in this little bit of "dressing up"! The children are first of all taught to cultivate the imagination; for, to quote Sister Grace's words, "A child without imagination will become a man without ideals, with narrow sympathies here and little interest in the great Unknown Land. Wherefore let us kindle imagination, and for this purpose there are no better instruments than fairy tales." Thus games and fairy tales, training body, imagination, and the heart, supplement the brain training of the day school.

The games played are mostly quaint Old English ones, chiefly those collected by Mrs. Gomme. Mr. Alfred Nutt of the Folk Lore Society has also taken a great interest in the Guild. Some of the prettiest of the Old English games played by the children are "Milking Pails," "Here come three Dukes a-Riding," "Old Roger," "Oats and Beans and Barley," "Round and Round the Village," "London Bridge is Broken Down," "Here we come up the Green Grass," etc. One of the most traditional is "London Bridge," and it is universally acknowledged to be a very ancient one. Knowing the importance of holding bridges in early times, it is not surprising that the fall and rebuilding of such an important one should be celebrated in rhyme, and so become the subject of a game. To those curious persons who seek origins of games amongst other details, this game is full of history. The other games are equally pretty and quaint, going back to either purely rustic times, or else, as in the case of "Here come Three Dukes a-Riding," are of historical worth in that they are evidently a survival in games of the slogans and war-cries of chieftains and families so prevalent at one time in the northern and border counties. Probably there is nothing so old in any game as the custom represented in

this one, of the girls marrying always into another village and of the bridegrooms appearing in parties to demand the hands of their brides.

Let me give you a slight sketch of an evening spent with the Guild of Play. The little girls march into the school-room two by two, with smiles on their faces, and a happy look of expectancy in their eyes. Perhaps there will be seventy children, and they will all set to play as though their lives depended upon the success of the game. Singing at the top of their voices some quaint old rhyme, they dance and hop about with joy and excitement. Their eyes gleam and their cheeks flush with the exercise, until they lose the weary look which seems almost habitual to the thin, pale faces; the lines, which make them look more like grown people than children, are smoothed out, and for a time they are real children. Then, for a rest, come fairy tales, and after these more songs. Before the children go, they kneel together for a closing prayer, a vesper hymn, and the benediction. Out into the night and streets go the little ones with fresh thoughts in their brains and new games to supplant the old horse-play, although to be quite candid, the versions of the quaint song-games played in the streets differ considerably from those played in the school-room. The directors of the Guild of Play believe that much of the best moral teaching is indirect, hence the children are not preached at, and again they are not bribed by toys or cakes to be good. The greatest *esprit de corps* exists amongst the children, and if any little entertainment is to be given, there is absolutely no selfishness shown as to who should perform; it is "Let Polly do so-and-so, please, Sister; she is better than the others," or, "Annie would like to sing such-and-such a rhyme"; rarely "Let me do it, Sister."

A FEW OF THE CHILDREN WHOM SISTER GRACE'S GUILD TEACHES TO BE MERRY.

The Guild has a delightful May Day festival, when a May Queen is chosen, and all sorts of sports, including dances round the maypole, are indulged in. The children wear festival dresses, all very plain and simple and as old-world as they can be contrived. The colours vary from time to time; sometimes for May Day they are all white, with pointed caps, the colours of flowers; at other times they will be old-world, but represent more of a particular period. They are all quaint and inexpensive, too, being usually made by friends interested in the movement.

At Christmas is another festival, when there is, amongst other joys, a Christmas tree. The children act a fairy play—they have been known to attempt scenes from Shakespeare—sing carols, and generally have a good time. Very often the children go and play to the old folks in some workhouse or infirmary, or to their parents; thus giving to others a little of their own joy and pleasure. Sometimes they play to the Guild of the Brave Poor Things, which is another scheme for giving happiness to those whose lives would otherwise be joyless. You remember the little boy in Mrs. Ewing's "Story of a Short Life," and his poor things. His motto was *lætus sorte mea*, and on this motto the Guild has been founded. Young and old, men, women, and children, they come together once a week and talk and play and work, and are amused for a few short hours. Deaf, and blind, and dumb, and lame; all surely people of sorrow, and yet when I have seen them gathered together, each wearing a red sash—like a soldier's, they think—I have rarely seen any but bright and happy looks on their faces. It is to these, the children of the Guild of Play sometimes go; and how they all enjoy the fun!

I must tell you rather a funny thing about the blind men. They are always given the

AN OLD ENGLISH SINGING GAME: "ROUND AND ROUND THE VILLAGE."

front seats at a magic lantern entertainment! They do not know that at a magic lantern show the front seat is not the best for seeing, and so they feel happy all the evening, following the lecturer's remarks with great attention.

The Guild of Play tries to send as many children as possible to the country in the summer, but of course it costs a good deal, so some must needs remain behind. Every week a band of willing workers—young girls very often—go down to Bermondsey to help play with the children, and to bring the freshness of their lives for a few hours into the slums of South-East London.

The Guild does not beg. It rather asks how, without outside help, in cities where the "'buryin' ground' is often the only near grassy place," and where play is but a mimicry of unbeautified lives, and of the excitements that follow deaths, is it possible to remain through all bewildering, innocent, and honest children?

"HERE WE COME UP THE GREEN GRASS."

Children of the Guild of Play at their games.

How to keep my Machine Nice.

A Serious Article with Scoffing Illustrations by Hilda Cowham.

THERE are, of course, many girls who never touch their machines except to ride them. On the other hand, many a girl is allowed to have a machine on the condition only that she attends to it and keeps it clean herself. I cannot for a moment pretend that cleaning a bicycle is pleasant work, but any girl who takes a pride in keeping her bicycle nice, will get a certain amount of satisfaction in properly carrying out the details of the cleaning, if she knows how to do it, and has the necessary materials.

1. I GO OUT AND GET CAUGHT IN A SHOWER.

I recommend every girl who has the care of her own machine to get at an ironmonger's an ordinary japanned "housemaid's boy" with a tray—a boy such as all housemaid's use when doing the grates. In the lower part should be kept a dust-sheet, a large apron and pair of sleeves, and a pair of strong old gloves—these to be used when the bicycle is really dirty. The tray should contain the various brushes, cloths, and dusters, a bottle of paraffin, and stuff for brightening the enamel and plated parts of the machine. Many girls will already possess a cleaning outfit, but for those who do not I would recommend the following :—

A long, narrow brush, for brushing round the axles and all the parts from which oil exudes.

An ordinary sixpenny saucepan brush. I have found this by far the best brush for wheels. It has hard bristles on one side, which cleans the tyres, and a soft mop on the other which cleans the rims and spokes admirably.

3.—IT NEEDS MORE CLEANING THAN I THOUGHT.

A chain brush.

A large soft duster.

A piece of rag for use where oil or paraffin require wiping off.

A wash-leather or velvet, for rubbing the bright parts.

There are an endless variety of compositions sold for keeping the machine bright. I have tried a good many, and find that for the plated parts, "Brillant Belge" is far the most satisfactory—much better than plate powder. It is sold in stone bottles from 6d to 1s. 6d. in price. It should be smeared on thinly with a bit of rag, and then the parts rubbed well with a soft cloth.

2. I COME HOME TO CLEAN THE MACHINE.

There is another preparation which is very useful—Miles' Cycle Paste. A thin smearing of this will protect the bright parts of the machine in damp weather, and when rubbed off it acts as a polisher, and is not sticky like vaseline. In putting a machine away for a month or two, a little of this preparation should be put on. It will prevent rust, and will immensely lessen the trouble of "cleaning up" when the bicycle is taken out again. In putting away a bicycle for any length of time, always either sling it up, or turn it upside down. Never leave it with the weight resting on the tyres. These will probably

become deflated, and the rims pressing on the tubes might injure the tyres.

The saddle and wallet should occasionally be rubbed with brown boot polish.

Cork handles soon get dirty, and will soil white gloves. They are easily cleaned with paraffin or benzine. I think a good soap is the cleanest.

Machines require oiling after about every 50 miles. Put 4 or 5 drops into the holes in the front and back wheel-axle, the crank bracket (generally two holes), and the gear-case hole. Some makes of pedals require oiling, others do not. When oiled, hold the machine for a minute tipped over first to one side and then to the other, that the oil may run into the ball races to right and left of each part.

4.—SO I THROW WATER ON IT.

I always use "Ruby" oil. It serves equally well for lubricating the machine and for the lamp. With regard to the lamp: the only one I have used is the "Silver King," and I have no fault to find with it in any way. It gives a beautiful light, and I have never known it go out. A lamp should always be trimmed on returning from a ride, and the oil emptied out (it can be used again). If the wick is left standing in oil, it is apt to clog, should the lamp not be used again for some time. A small funnel and an extra bottle, kept with the lamp, enable it to be filled and emptied in a moment, and one is well repaid for the small amount of trouble by the lamp's never going wrong. When lighting up, always let your lamp burn for a minute or so before you start riding.

6.—SO I GET MY OIL-CAN OUT TO OIL IT.

It is advisable also, before starting on a ride, not only to see that the tyres are properly inflated, but to be sure that the break is in working order. The nuts which fasten the pedals, and each wheel into the forks, should frequently be looked to, to see whether they are properly tight. The gear-case should occasionally be undone, the chain cleaned, and the rivet which fastens the end of the chain looked at, to see that it is absolutely secure.

7. IN SPITE OF ALL I DO, IT STILL CREAKS.

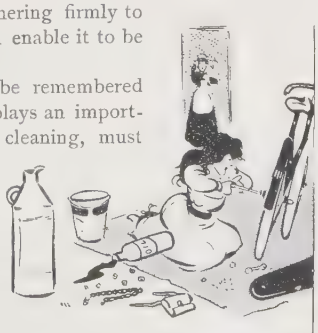
It is quite a simple matter to tighten the chain if it is slack, but I often find that people do not know how to do it. First loosen the two nuts at the end of the back wheel hub, then carefully screw up the small nuts on the chain adjustments. Care must be taken to give each nut the same number of turns, or else the wheel would not be exactly straight. Then screw up the hub nuts quite tight again. With regard to the actual cleaning of the machine, much labour may be saved, especially in winter, by taking precautions to prevent the machine getting unduly dirty. For instance, the plated handles and break should always be kept swathed in coverings of washleather when the machine is not in use. And when the bicycle is put aside for some weeks, it is advisable to tie up the pedals and cranks also in washleather bags. I have tried various-shaped wrappings, and find the ones described here are quite satisfactory. Make two loose long bags, one for each handle; the right handle will require a much wider bag to take in the brake, unless another very narrow bag is made for the break handle alone. Then get a long narrow leather, cut it up the middle at one end, and turn the two ends in to form small pockets for the foot-rests. Make a small pocket to fit the brake, and sew it in the centre, between the foot-rest pockets. Then sew a long piece of tape across the leather, just below where the handle-bar comes, and two short tapes above the pockets. To tie up the machine, first slip on the handle-bar bags; then take the shaped piece and fit the three pockets on to the foot-rests and brake and tie; draw the leather tightly up and over the head of the machine, and down again to where the upper frame tube joins the head tube. Then take the two ends of the tape and cross and re-cross round the head-tube and tie lightly. By this means the plated parts of the machine will be kept in fair condition, even in foggy weather. Without any such precaution, a single foggy day will make the plated parts look like dull pewter.

5. THE NEXT TIME I GO OUT, IT CREAKS A GREAT DEAL.

Before going out for a ride on soft or muddy roads the rims and spokes of the wheels, lower back forks, and lower parts of the mudguards, might be lightly rubbed over with a cloth moistened with paraffin. This will prevent the mud adhering firmly to the machine, and will enable it to be wiped off quite easily.

It should always be remembered that paraffin, which plays an important part in bicycle cleaning, must never be allowed to touch the tyres, as it causes them to perish. It should also be kept away from the pedals.

On returning from a ride, if the machine is dirty; first spread a dust cloth, then (unless you have a



8.—SO I TAKE IT HOME DETERMINED TO DISCOVER THE CAUSE. I UNDO A FEW NUTS—

stand which raises the wheels and allows them to spin freely), turn the machine upside down, first locking the head, and allow it to stand on the saddle and handle-bar.

9.—AND OTHER THINGS.

1. Brush the mud off the tyres, and scrape off the accumulation of mud from the inside of the mud-guards with an old knife. This must always be attended to first, as the dust and dirt from the wheels flies to a certain extent on to the frame of the machine, and if the wheel clearing were left to the last, the machine would require a careful dusting again afterwards.

2. Next clean the enamelled parts of the frame, wheel-rims and spokes, mud-guards and gear case. If there is dry mud on the machine, it will be better first to wipe over these parts with a cloth moistened with paraffin, before using brush or duster. This will bring the mud off without scratching the enamel. Afterwards use the soft side of the saucepan brush for the rims and spokes, and a duster for the other parts.

3. Then with a small narrow brush, or folds of soft rag, clean the dirt from both ends of the wheel axles, outside the hubs; the crank axles, both ends of each pedal, and round all the places where the machine has to be oiled.

4. Well brush the india-rubber parts of the pedals.

5. Turn the machine right side up again and dust those parts of the frame which could not be got at before. Then well rub the plated parts with washleather or velvet, and put on the washleather wrappings.

If the machine is only dusty and not muddy, it will probably be enough to attend to point No. 3, and, in addition, to give it a good flicking with a feather brush and a rub over with a duster.

10.—I FIND I CANNOT PUT THEM BACK.

A really wet machine requires extra care. Besides carefully drying and cleaning it, paraffin should be put into an empty oil can and squirted into all the points where water may have trickled. These are, the three joints of the brake-rod; the handle-bar, where it joins the head-tube; the lamp-bracket joint; the ends of the wheel axles; the chain adjustment screws, and the right and left end of each pedal.

H COWHAM

11.—FINALLY JACK HAS TO TAKE THE WHOLE THING TO THE CYCLE-MAKER TO BE PUT TOGETHER AGAIN.

It is wise to carry a small tube or box of vaseline in the wallet. Then if overtaken by rain, a little may be lightly smeared on to the joints of the machine, thus preventing the possibility of the rain penetrating.

It is advisable occasionally to squirt paraffin into all the bearings, through the oil holes, to thoroughly clean them. The paraffin should then be emptied out and the machine oiled.

Once a year the bicycle should be thoroughly overhauled by an experienced workman, to see that it is in good order, that the parts are not worn or dangerous in any way, and that the balls are right.

To Our Musical Readers.

A PRIZE FOR THE BEST SONG.

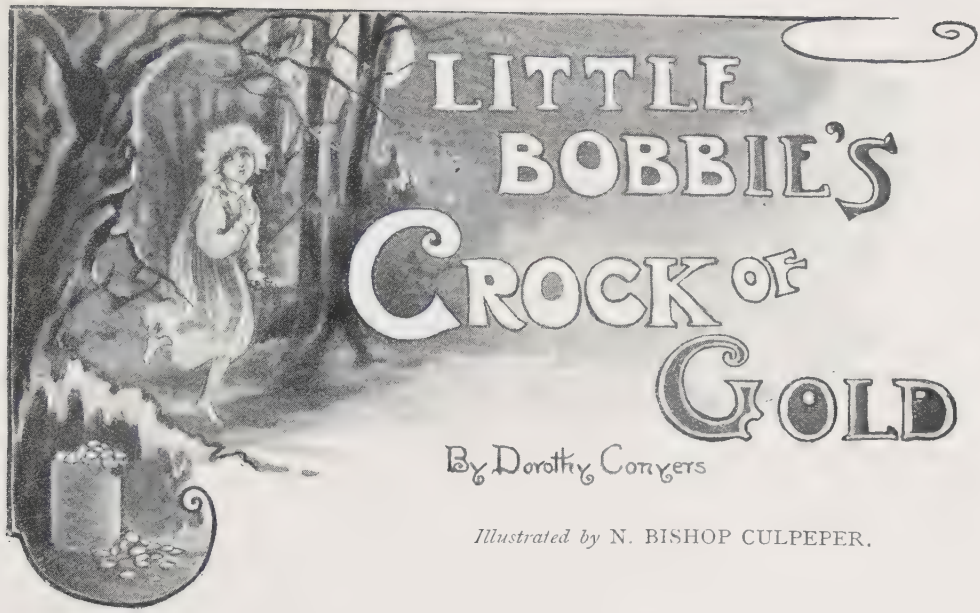
MADAME LIZA LEHMANN *has kindly consented to decide for us in this competition.*

WE have arranged a Musical Competition, which we trust may be the means of obtaining wider recognition for the work of some girl with a genius for the writing of songs. The competition is open to every girl, without distinction, under the age of twenty-five. The competitors are to take a poem, the choice of which is left entirely to their discretion—grave or gay, martial or domestic—and to set it to music. The fact that Mme. Liza Lehmann, the celebrated composer of "The Persian Garden" and "The Daisy Chain," has consented to be the judge, will make the award of very great importance, and the publication of the successful song in THE GIRL'S REALM should secure universal recognition for the work if it proves to be worthy.

There will be one Prize of the value of FIVE GUINEAS, and five Diplomas will be awarded. The songs are to reach the office, THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C., not later than May 30th, 1902.

We are hoping that there will be a universal response to this offer. Will our readers kindly bring the matter to the notice of any girl they may know who has a gift for composition?

The copyright of the successful song will become the property of the Proprietors of THE GIRL'S REALM.



LITTLE BOBBIE'S CROCK OF GOLD

By Dorothy Conyers

Illustrated by N. BISHOP CULPEPER.

CAPTAIN CECIL ROBERTS was seated very comfortably in General Blake's cool drawing-room. His eyes were fixed admiringly on Katie Anstruther, the General's niece and ward. The only thing that troubled him was the presence of a small boy, the son of the house, who, after politely shaking hands, had sat down opposite him, and was regarding him with an interest which made Cecil nervous.

"What is your name?" asked the child, suddenly.

"Roberts," returned Cecil, rather shortly.

"Wobert! That is the sames as mine. They calls me Bobbie. I think," slowly, "I shall call you Big Bobbie, 'cos there coulds not be two the same, and you is werry big."

Small Bobbie nodded his head gravely; he felt he had settled an important question. He was a fragile child of five: tiny for his age, and with a strange trick of putting on plurals to most of his words; all his R's, too, turned to W's. This was almost the first young man he had seen come to the house, and he felt he ought to honour his guest.

No one ever attempted to correct the child for his quaint language, for Bobbie was the only son of his father's old age, and was worshipped as old men are wont to worship their children. His delicate mother had died at his birth, and the child was the one soft spot in the General's toughened heart.

"I likes you, Big Bobbie," he said suddenly, after a prolonged stare at the big Captain; he put out a tiny hand, to be swallowed in Cecil's big brown one.

"You has a nice face, and I hopes you will come here often." Little Bobbie did not understand why his Cousin Katie caught him up and kissed him warmly. It ruffled his dignity, and shaking himself he went slowly away out of the window.

Cecil Roberts echoed the child's wish, heartily though silently. Since, three weeks before, he had met Katie at a dance, he had realised that the world held only one woman for him.

This was the first time he had come to call on the General, who bore the reputation of being far from hospitable. Cecil hoped vaguely that the fact that he was a soldier might soften the old man towards him.

"He is the quaintest little mite," Katie said, watching the tiny figure outside, "and he is far from strong. I don't know what my uncle would do if anything happened to him."

"Poor little chap." Cecil forgot all about the child, as he watched the sun chase and

catch the gold shades in Katie's hair; then the General came in himself.

Little Bobbie was destined to play an important part in Cecil's life. Something about the big dragoon had absolutely fascinated the child; he followed him like a shadow, and made his father actually send little notes of invitation if Captain Roberts did not come constantly. This was just what Cecil wanted, but it often taxed his patience sorely when he was dragged away from Katie in the garden to play cricket with a soft ball and a bat which came up to his knee, or ordered from a chair near his divinity to see "my chookens and guinea-pigs." Sometimes Cecil's temper trembled in the balance, but he found it hard to resist the pleading voice and the clasp of the thin, little hand, and afterwards he was glad it had been so.

The General smiled on him for his son's sake, quite oblivious of why Cecil came so often. It seemed a natural thing to him for anyone to come to see the boy. Katie was as yet only a child in his eyes.

Now it happened one day that Little Bobbie was digging in his own little garden, making mounds of earth and stones, and telling a story aloud to himself. Cecil Roberts and Katie were sitting near in his little "earwiggs" creeper-covered arbour, the low murmur of their voices just reaching him. He felt a little sorry for his friend whenever he was left with Katie, but now he was busy with his garden, and Big Bobbie must be contented until he could carry him off to play cricket.

"Sir!"

His father's voice, thundering through the air, stopped Little Bobbie's story in the middle; his fork fell from his hand, and he sat down right in the middle of his favourite plant. The General, strolling silently through the garden in search of his son, heard the murmuring voices in the arbour, and had looked in.

Captain Cecil Roberts was sitting there, looking very happy, his arm round Katie's waist, while her sunny head was resting contentedly on his shoulder. It was this dreadful discovery which had drawn forth this mighty "Sir!"

"May I ask what this means?" the General demanded, pushing back the strands of the creepers.

"It means," said Cecil, rising, "that I have just asked your niece to be my wife."

"Very nice," remarked the General. "And may I ask what my niece had to say?"

"I said 'Yes,'" murmured Katie, blushing behind a friendly clematis.

"Nicer still," sputtered the General furiously. "Go into the house, miss, and leave me to talk to this gentleman."

A moment later, Little Bobbie saw Katie's dejected back as she walked away towards the house. Then Little Bobbie did what he had always been taught to consider a dreadful thing, for he sat on and listened. He really did not mean to: he only sat on bewildered, in the middle of his flowers, and heard the raised voices in the arbour without thinking of what he was doing.

A great deal of what was said was unintelligible to the boy, but he managed to gather that Big Bobbie had behaved very badly by sitting in the arbour with Katie; that Big Bobbie wished to take Katie away with him, and that the General considered him "an insolent pauper." Then followed some words about four and five hundred, which Bobbie could not understand. And, finally (this was the awful part of it) his beloved friend was to go away and never to come back again. The thought of it made the child's head swim.

At last the General went away, and Bobbie heard some one sit down, very heavily, on the arbour seat. He got up slowly from the ruins of his pet poppies, and crept to the arbour's mouth. Captain Cecil Roberts was sitting there looking blankly at nothing, trying to realise the blow which had crushed him. He started as the boy appeared and spoke to him.

"Please, Big Bobbie, I was in my gardens, and I hearded; and, oh! I am *so* sorry."

Cecil choked back an impatient word: something in Bobbie's sorrowful white face restrained him, and he said, "Thank you, little man," very gently, instead.

"I do nots understands" (sorrow made Bobbie's plurals worse than ever); "is it that you want to take Katie away, and you had not enough moneys to pay for her?"

"That's it." Cecil smiled grimly.

"And you will have to go aways, and never see me or Katie agains?"

"Just so." Cecil spoke gruffly, and fought hard for the honour of his manhood, looking fixedly upwards through a maze of creepers.

"Big mens never cries, do they?" said Little Bobbie, curiously, after a brief silence.

"Never, Bobbie," said Cecil, slowly.

"Then you has a fly in your eye, Big Bobbie, and it is hurting you werry much."

"Thank you, little man; I will take it out." To this day Cecil never knows how he bore with his tiny questioner. He must have felt the depth of the child's sympathy, or seen how deeply Bobbie was sorrowing too.

"And is you werry fond of Katie?" Bobbie said, wistfully.

"Very—very fond!" The flies were troubling Cecil's eyes again.

"Fonder than you is—of me?" The "of me" came faintly.

"Yes, Bobbie."

Bobbie sat down on the gravel, gulping down his first great sorrow. He had always imagined that Cecil loved him best, and now he saw he was only second. There was something in it all that he could not understand: something which made him feel small and useless, and which brought a painful choking to his throat. But he fought it down manfully, and tried to think. Big Bobbie must not go away.

A sudden thought lit his face up. He remembered that only yesterday one of the dairymaids had told him that if anyone went out and dug in the Fairy's Mound on the cliff, he or she would find a crock of gold. Only, one must go alone and at night, or the fairies would not yield their treasure. If—if— The magnitude of his scheme frightened him for a minute. Then fear died away at the thought of finding enough money to help his friend.

He rose in his excitement, running to where Cecil sat.

"Would a cwock be enough," he said: "a cwock of gold, to buy Katie with?"

Cecil stroked the boy's hair. "If it was big enough," he said, smiling a little. He thought the child must have some hidden hoard of pennies which he meant to fetch. "You mustn't worry about me," he said; "I shall do all right."

"But a cwock," Bobbie persisted, two crimson spots flaring on his thin cheeks. "I will take it to father in the morning, and he must gives you Katie. And then yous will love me more, perhaps." Bobbie choked as he finished.

"Little friend, I do love you" (Cecil was dimly grasping the depth of Bobbie's affection), "only Katie comes first. You can't understand now."

"I suppose I will some day, when I grows up," said the boy, wistfully.

"Yes." Cecil wondered sadly if there would ever be a "some day" for the fragile little figure before him.

Bobbie's head was so full of his scheme that he only dropped a few tears when Cecil strode away. He had an idea that Cecil was going

"THE GENERAL, STROLLING SILENTLY THROUGH THE GARDEN, HEARD THE MURMURING VOICES IN THE ARBOUR, AND LOOKED IN."—(*p.* 580.)

O O

straight away that evening, and was not happy until he had made him promise to wait for "de morrow day," and the "cwock" which was to work such wonders.

Then Little Bobbie ran round to the farmyard to hear more about the Fairy's treasure.

"Shure as livin' 'tis there, Masther Bobbie," Mollie, the dairymaid, assured him; "but, indade, I'd rather leave it there for ever than go out alone on the lonesome cliff."

Bobbie wavered a little as he went away: the fear of the black night almost overcame him, but he soon made up his mind. Big Bobbie should not go away when there was something buried in the ground which would help him.

Bobbie went to bed very quietly that night, and closed his eyes tightly, so that they thought he was asleep. He found it very hard work to keep awake, too, and thought his nurse would never go to bed. He was afraid to start before. At last her snores told him she was asleep, and he crept out of bed. His clothes lay on a chair, but he dreaded the strings and buttons, so he slipped into his little white dressing-gown, and then, his slippers in his hand, crept out.

He shivered as he went down the staircase and into the library, where he knew he could turn the key in the glass door. In another minute he was out in the garden. It was so cold there Bobbie's teeth chattered, and everything was so big and still. The shrubs cast awful black shadows on the grass—shadows which were shaped like giants, with hands cast out to grasp him.

The summer-house had turned into a dreadful black-mouthed cave. He flew past it once he had got his little trowel. Even the roses, swinging their dew-drenched heads in the moonlight, were not themselves. One of them tried to clutch him as he passed, reaching out a thorny arm.

Bobby was honestly terrified, and the cold made his bare legs quiver; but he thought of Big Bobbie's joy when the crock was found, and ran on towards the gate on the cliff. If only the trees were not so black and big, and the great moon, a white, cold face, leering down at him! The blackness of the narrow path to the gate made him shudder again: he dreamt of a thousand things which might start out of the shadows. Out on the cliff, which was forbidden ground to him, he went more easily, for, after the first sheep had nearly terrified him over the edge, he felt that they were alive, and were companions. There were no shadows here, only the great grey sea moaning restlessly below, striking against the sullen black rocks, then, flashing up, a gleam of silver spray.

Bobbie kept away from the edge, for the flash and dull rumbling frightened him again, it had never sounded so in the day time. It seemed hours to him before he saw the green hillock which was called the Fairy's Mound, and then he felt it worth all the trouble and fright as he scrambled up the side, and on the top began to dig furiously with his trowel.

* * * *

Cecil Roberts was strolling dejectedly home to barracks about eleven that night. He had been out to dine, and the beauty of the night had tempted him to walk home. As he passed the Cedar's gate, he cast a wistful look in. At the same moment he was startled by the General's voice shouting "Bobbie," in agonized tones. Lights were flashing in the garden, and forgetting all that had passed, he climbed over the low wall, and ran up the path.

"Bobbie, have you seen Bobbie?" The General rushed at him wildly.

"No. What has happened?"

"Gone out. Katie went to say goodnight, and found his bed empty, and the library door open. Out in the dew in his nightdress. Oh, it's awful."

Cecil stood and thought, and a heaven-sent gleam of recollection came to him.

"Is there a forth near here," he cried, "anything to do with the fairies?" Cecil knew the superstition of the country. He strung together Bobbie's suddenly talking about the crock of gold, and his little hopeful face.

"There is the Fairy's Mound," said Katie's voice. She was standing in the shadow. "It is out on the cliff."

It was no time for explanations. "Take me there," was all Cecil said. And they started, the General following without a word; he felt anything was better than searching the garden again and again.

They looked down anxiously to where the sea licked the black rocks below, their fear too terrible to speak of. The moon went behind a cloud as they hastened along, and they were close upon the green hillock when she flooded the land with white light again. Sitting on the very top of the Mound was a little white-clad figure, sobbing wildly, a broken jam crock by its side. The figure rose as the three came up, and stretched out its arms: "Oh, Big Bobbie," wailed Little Bobbie's voice, "I founded it. I founded the cwock, but it's empties. Someone has taken the gold." His sobs drowned his voice.

Cecil was silent, as he took off his coat, wrapping it round the child, and lifting him in his arms. He understood why Bobbie had come out, and what the miserable words meant. There was a little hole in the green of the Mound, which an active rabbit could have made in ten minutes. It all came out as they walked back, and the General held his head low as Bobbie ended his story with a fresh burst of sobs, and repeated "it was empty," despairingly. How the old broken jam pot had ever been buried in the Mound, they never knew.

Bobbie was put to bed, but he tossed about restlessly, while his father watched him, trembling as he thought of what effect the night dews might have on that feeble frame. The child broke again and again into piteous tears; he had risked so much, and done nothing. And at last he wailed for Big Bobbie to say "Good nights!" to him.

Cecil came up and tried to soothe him and send him to sleep, vainly.

"But when I founds it," gasped out Bobbie, miserably, "I thought there would be lots of money for you, and there was nothings. I went through the shadows, and under that dreadful moon for you, and now it is no use; there was nothings. You must go aways."

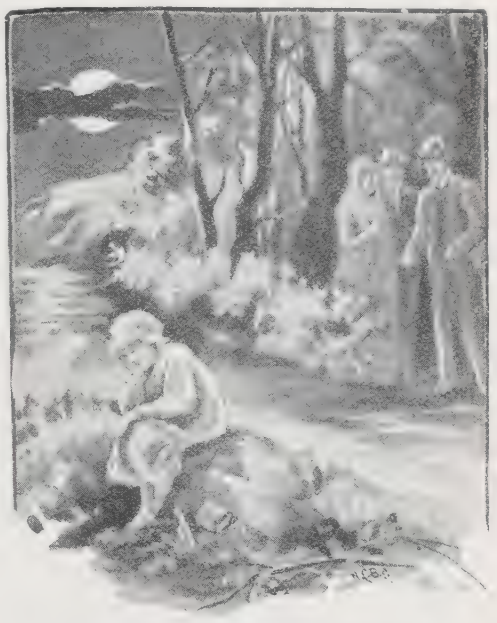
A sudden light lit up the General's worn face. "Bobbie," he said, "you will have lots of gold of your own some day. Would you like to give some of it to Captain, to Big Bobby here, as your crock was empty?"

"Nuff to pays for Katie?" Bobbie sat up joyously.

"Lots."

"Oh, father! You will be sures to give it to him? Then," he murmured contentedly, "I expecs the fairies empties that cwock on purpose, cos they knew yous would fill it when we brought it."

Cecil would have murmured some words of thanks or of remonstrance, but the General silenced him with a look. The child dropped



"SITTING ON THE VERY TOP OF THE MOUND WAS A LITTLE WHITE-CLAD FIGURE, SOBBING WILDLY."

asleep with his hand in Cecil's, a contented smile on his lips.

So Cecil and Katie had their crock of gold of little Bobbie's finding after all, and went away together happily. Foremost among the wedding presents was a broken jam crock, filled with bright old coins, labelled "Bobbie's Crock of Gold." And afterwards, because as Cecil had sadly thought, there was never to be a "some day" for brave-hearted, fragile Little Bobbie, they had all his gold, and sorrowed very deeply when it came to them.

A SHOCKED ANCESTRAL AUDIENCE.

"Snapshot Drawing."

A CHAT WITH MR. ABLETT, OF THE ROYAL DRAWING SOCIETY.

Whose pupils were taken to see "Blue-Bell in Fairyland," and made the following drawings from memory for THE GIRL'S REALM.

BY ALICE CORKRAN.

ONE OF THE FAIRIES, BY DOROTHY KÜCK.

Aged 19, and winner of the Tenniel Prize for 1902.

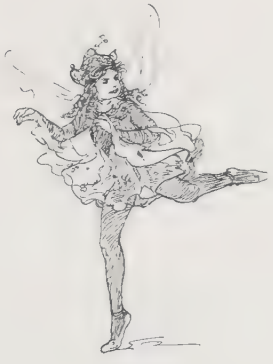
IT was a day in early spring when I made my way through the old-world Queen Anne quarter near St. James's Park to find Mr. Ablett in the headquarters of the Royal Drawing Society. I had heard of this Society and of the extraordinary results obtained by the methods of the director. What was that method, what were the results it showed? This is what I had set myself to find out.

SOME MORE FAIRIES.

I found Mr. Ablett surrounded by drawings. An immense cast of the Venus of Milo was in one corner of the room behind me. But what generally struck me was the absence of the "properties" that are usually to be found in a studio. There were drawings by children, drawings by more advanced scholars, and as I looked over them I found Mr. Ablett ready and willing to talk.

"What is the Ablett system of which so much is heard? It extends all over England. It is found in some of the London County Council Schools, in the Girls' Public Day Schools, in many of our large schools. It is taught privately in homes."

"The idea of it," said Mr. Ablett, "is the return to nature in teaching drawing. It is to put an end to copying. Drawing comes as naturally to children as does talking. Every child tries to express itself by means of drawing. Its attempts may often be quite rude, but they are attempts to represent what it is thinking about and what it cares for. Now," continued Mr. Ablett, taking up a drawing by a child of a horse and its rider, "that is a definite effort of a child to represent a man on horseback. As you see, it is done throughout with the single and continuous stroke that you use in writing. There is nothing here niggling and broken in the line. In the same way with this robin. What action there is! This is how the bird struck the child, the little pert expression of the beak and eyes, the swift motion of the body hanging on to the branch. The freshness of the child's vision is extraordinary. How to make use of that freshness, how preserve it, that is the germ idea of my system."



—FROM THE PEN OF—

—JESSIE MCCONNELL.

As Mr. Ablett expounded his method I grew interested in this attempt to discover natural methods of learning and to adapt to them methods of

teaching." He tries to find out how a child with a natural taste for drawing would, if left to himself, begin to draw. He first, as it were, turns the child loose in Nature with pencil and sketch book, and then leaves him to set to work on horse or cow, on plant or tree, and the miscellaneous gear of the domestic interior in his own way. Then he steps in as teacher, and, still keeping to the child's own chosen method, shows him where he is right and where he is wrong, and generally gives him a lift on his way. Now this may not seem very much in itself, but if we compare it with other methods of teaching drawing we shall find that it means a good deal. First, if we take those methods as they are — or, perhaps, to put it more charitably, as they were — embodied in the old South Kensington method, there is all the difference in the world. South Kensington took the promising pupil, and, without asking him or itself any question as to his own intuitive method of setting to work on a drawing, gave him to copy No. 1. of the first of a long series of drawings from the flat—in other words, set him to make a copy of a copy. The flat drawing of the elementary stage of South Kensington is a drawing-master's rendering of some simple object, a flower, a piece of ornament or what not. It is usually done in pure outline without a bit of shade—and it comes out in the drawing-master's representation of it—the pure hard line of a perfectly mechanical evenness of texture, which gives, with mechanical fidelity, the outlines of a leaf or of a flower. But the student who has to copy this copy has, in all probability, never seen the flower or the leaf, and Mr. Ablett's learning in the matter has proved that the very first thing is to let him see both, in Nature's own original, and also to make his choice from them and from other objects seen in the same way. The child's way would be to stand before the thing itself, in its natural roundness and bulk, and to give a representation of it as best he could, which, of course, would be a very grotesque representation at the start, and all but his fond mother would be in doubt whether it was meant for a lily or for a dray-horse, and would only be able to decide rightly on confidential information previously received from himself. But it would be a beginning in the right and natural way, and when it was done the drawing-master would step in to tell him, by an exchange of friendly confidences, how he had missed his effect, and how his foreshortening was but a jumble of contradictory effects, and his outlines had not caught the true character of the thing before him. His second drawing, made from another actual object in Nature or still life, would be better than the first, and he would make rapid progress for the simple reason that he was on the right road.

"BLUEBELL" (MISS ELLALINE TERRISS) AND THE LITTLE CHILD.
BY DOROTHY KÜCK.

ANOTHER DRAWING BY DOROTHY KÜCK.

ONE OF THE MOST APPLAUDED SCENES IN "BLUEBELL."
Drawn by Eileen Hood, aged 9, winner of Princess Louise's Prize, 1902.

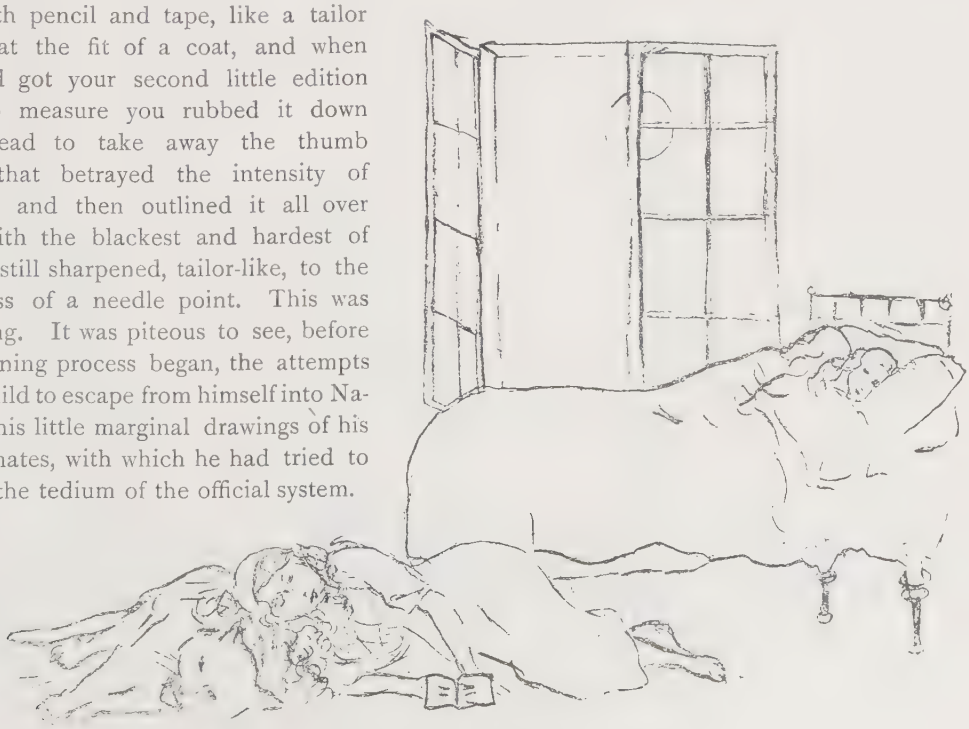
The absurdity of the South Kensington system was, that it was a highly elaborated plan

of teaching children how to describe with the pencil what they had never seen. They went on for months and months drawing flowers and leaves from the flat with a perfectly mechanical precision, too often with the help of the measuring tape, and when one day they happened by accident to stand before Nature itself they were utterly bewildered. They found that they had to begin all over again, with the extreme inconvenience of having not only to learn but to forget as they went on. The very shadows they had to represent were not as first seen shadows in Nature, but simply as shadows drawn on the flat copy, and they laboured away at them with the crayon as they had previously laboured with the others with the H.B. pencil. They were many months at the pure outline drawing and many months more at the stippled shading, before they were allowed so much as a small flower or any other thing which the flat phantoms were supposed to represent. The great struggle was for "nattiness" of appearance, for a sort of sordid finish, utterly foreign as a rule to the child-nature, and especially foreign to the artistic one. You toiled at the great flat copy with pencil and tape, like a tailor toiling at the fit of a coat, and when you had got your second little edition of it to measure you rubbed it down with bread to take away the thumb marks that betrayed the intensity of the toil, and then outlined it all over again with the blackest and hardest of pencils, still sharpened, tailor-like, to the acuteness of a needle point. This was a drawing. It was piteous to see, before the cleaning process began, the attempts of the child to escape from himself into Nature by his little marginal drawings of his school mates, with which he had tried to beguile the tedium of the official system.

Well, now, Mr. Ablett has changed all this. He follows the line of liking in the child's own mind, and gives him his choice of subjects and the line of common sense, by putting him straight before the real thing to be drawn without any officious intermediary on his part or on the part of the copy from the flat.

DRAWN BY DOROTHY KÜCK.

Mr. Ablett showed me many drawings of the little folk, ranging from the ages of three to eight and nine. Some were quite beautiful studies of birds and beasts, flowers and foliage;



"BLUEBELL," TIRED OUT, FALLS ASLEEP ON THE CAT.

Drawn by Eileen Hood, aged 9.

some were done in outline, the majority in brush work. "A great deal of the success of my system depends upon the use of the brush—the free untrammelled use thereof stimulates the imagination. Suppose," he said, "that these children had been submitted to the flat freehand copy of the geometrical pattern, and such-like methods, would not their bright young spirits have flagged? In the sense of drudgery would not they have lost the sense of wonder? To discover talent in little ones I award a gold medal to teachers who find it out among their children and, having discovered it, woo it to its development.

"BLUEBELL" SITS BESIDE THE MAGIC OAK.

Drawn by Constance Chapman, aged 7.

"Drawing from memory is one of the things most insisted upon," he went on. "Teach children to observe accurately, and then to reproduce what they have seen." A flying bird, a juggler balancing balls on his nose, a rider on horseback, children at play, appeared over and over again in these children's studies. His great idea is to teach writing and drawing simultaneously.

Mr. Ablett told me the story of the growth of his idea. When he was ten years old he imitated the artist who was sketching the church of Peterborough. This clever drawing may be seen on the cover of the books of the Royal Drawing Society.

In 1872 Mr. Ablett became Assistant Master of the Bradford Grammar School, and there he began to carry out his favourite idea of teaching writing and drawing simultâneously. Writing is nothing more or less than memory drawing. He began the systematic study of the development of the artistic faculty shown by children in their spontaneous drawing, and he encouraged the use of the continuous line, so different from the broken line favoured by drawing teachers in general. He also encouraged the use of brush-work as much as possible from the very first, and drawing became in his hands a means of education, or the earliest play of the nursery and the Kindergarten. Little by little the shackles that wedge round the little child at its first start in the artist life were loosened. The tedium of the drawing lesson was at an end, and the child joyously entered into the bright world of art.

Mr. Ablett's system was adopted by the School Board for London. Miss Buss and other heads of schools invited him to give the examination in their schools. This was the origin of the "Royal Drawing Society," which has now nearly five hundred of the great public and commercial schools taking its annual examination or competing in its annual exhibition. The Princess Louise became its Presi-

THE FLOWER SELLERS.

The work of Constance Chapman, aged 7.

dent. The Chairman of the Council is Sir James D. Linton and Mr. T. R. Ablett, the Honorary Director. This Society has been formed and started, and is now in full activity. The prizes are many. The Duchess of Argyll gives a prize for memory-drawing; the late Lord Leighton's sisters, Mr. and Mrs. Watts, Sir G. Kekewich, Sir John Tenniel, and others give them.

Further to encourage the children Mr. Ablett has instituted the "Snap-Shot Drawing" Competitions. Not more than half a minute is allowed for observing for snap-shot drawing, and less than half an hour is spent in developing it. The first Snap-Shot Drawing Competition was held at the Crystal Palace. Numbers of children attended daily every morning to watch the object placed before them, and then to elaborate it. The little ones worked cheerfully together, proud of their drawing and delighted with the result. "They are very clever," said King Edward VII., when the results were displayed before him.

To encourage the work of this Society, whose methods are so original, and the results so remarkable, the committee has decided to make a grant of five pounds from the Trust Fund as a prize from girls to girls. The prize can be competed for by girls only and by those who wish to make art their profession.

MISS ELLALINE TERRISS AS "BLUEBELL."
Drawn by Marjorie Hood, aged 13.

You will agree with me that the girl's drawings are spirited and spontaneous. The fairies, as they skip and dance, have movement and grace. "Bluebell" selling flowers to the child, or falling asleep tired-out on the cat's back, is a bright little heroine who has wandered into fairy land. Then how clever is the drawing of the tiny maid marching arm-in-arm with her soldier. How daintily self-conscious she is, how prettily shy; and he is mighty proud of himself, his accoutrements, and his companion. There is character also, in Jessie McConnell's representations of the various transformations of Mr. Seymour Hicks. These drawings from artists of seven years old and upward fittingly illustrate the drama that wanders so easily from that land of marvel, with its magic oak and its curious beasts, to the world of to-day.

"DICKY," THE CROSSING-SWEEPER.

AS SIR HENRY IRVING.

AS MR. BEERBOHM TREE.

AS MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

SOME OF MR. SEYMOUR HICKS' IMPERSONATIONS IN "BLUEBELL."
Drawn by Jessie McConnell, aged 15

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF DELFT.

This picture, 3 feet long and 2½ feet wide, is represented entirely in postage stamps.

Pictures made with Stamps.

A NEW HOBBY FOR GIRLS.

BY J. E. WHITBY.

THERE are many people, young and old, who nowadays collect stamps, and who have thus secured a valuable and interesting possession, while acquiring unconsciously a vast amount of useful information respecting the different countries from which they come.

Everyone knows that in gathering together the stamps necessary to form a representative collection, a great number are thrown on one side, and many of these, duplicates or faulty specimens, being for various reasons useless for what the schoolboy loves to call "swops," come naturally to the waste-paper basket, or the fire.

Some ingenious persons have discovered that from these apparently unserviceable squares, which are often of delicate hues, an uncommon kind of mosaic can be made, and probably more than one of my readers has seen tables or ornamental plates covered with geometrical designs made with these rejected postal passes. The effect when whole stamps are used cannot be said to be altogether artistic, but the idea has been found capable of elaboration to such an extent, that something really worth having can be produced at the expense of a little time and trouble spent over these hitherto despised fragments of coloured paper.

Among those who have seen in the postage stamp something more than the mere proof that the Government tax has been paid on letter or parcel, is Monsieur van Wiljick of Liège, who lately astonished the visitors to a Philatelic Exhibition in Paris, by the extremely remarkable and interesting pictures made out of postage stamps, which he showed there.

Indeed, so much attention was attracted by them, that M. van Wiljick received letters

from all parts of the world asking for information concerning them.

The pictures are five in number, two being landscapes, two religious subjects, and one a *genre* picture. It should be explained that these are faithful copies of genuine old paintings (which have been described, not inaptly, as "examples of a new Flemish school"), a fact that has greatly increased the difficulty of production, for not only must the design of the original be faithfully copied, but the colours must be exactly reproduced.

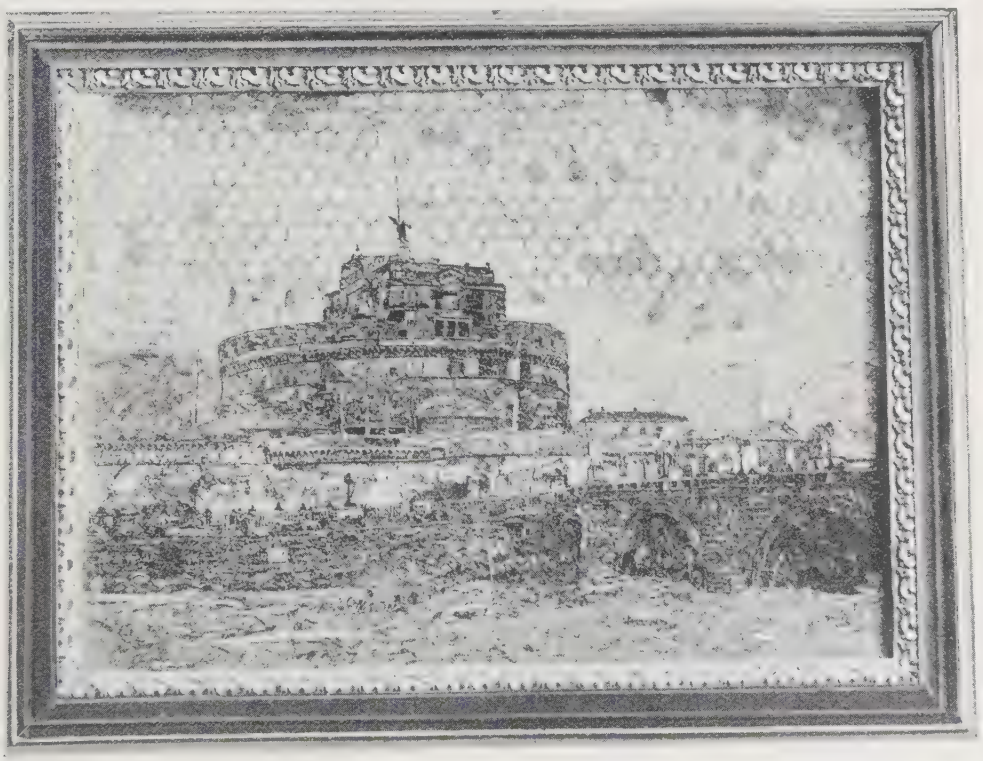
The largest of these three pictures, which represents a scene in the neighbourhood of Delft, Holland, measures over three feet long, and is two feet and a-half wide. It took eighteen months to execute. This is the latest, and was finished in 1899.

Another picture is called "The Adoration of the Holy Family," and shows a Dutch father and mother praying with their children before a picture of the Virgin and Child. This design, which is crowded with detail, measures sixteen inches by twenty. It took a year to complete.

"Jesus calling little children to Him" is framed in a copper frame engraved specially for it. It is also sixteen inches long, is ten wide, and took nine months' work.

Another picture after Boucher, and known as "Le Denicheur," was the first of the five. It is twenty-two inches by nineteen, and occupied M. van Wiljick for nine months.

It may be further explained that these pictures are made entirely on the principle of mosaic, by the arrangement of morsels—often of the very tiniest—cut from stamps, and so arranged with regard to colour as to follow exactly the design chosen. The marks of obliteration on the stamps are cleverly made use of so as to form the necessary outlines and shadows, every advantage being taken of line and marking. In some cases whole stamps are employed for the background, as in the picture of Jesus and the children (where one-franc green Swiss were used). Here a kind of



THE CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO, ROME.

Made of used postage stamps.

diaper design has been added by the insertion of other pieces. The result is very effective.

How much research is required to find exactly the correct tint, precisely the right marking, cannot be understood, so the clever inventor says, until the task is undertaken. The pieces cut out must, of course, fit together exactly like a puzzle, and the artist not only asserts that his pictures are in no way touched up—that every line, every mark, is exactly as he cut it from the stamp.

Possibly some of our readers may be tempted to try this work, which, though requiring great care and niceness, is not without its fascinations. It might certainly serve as a pleasant and interesting occupation for an invalid, or one unable to take active exercise.

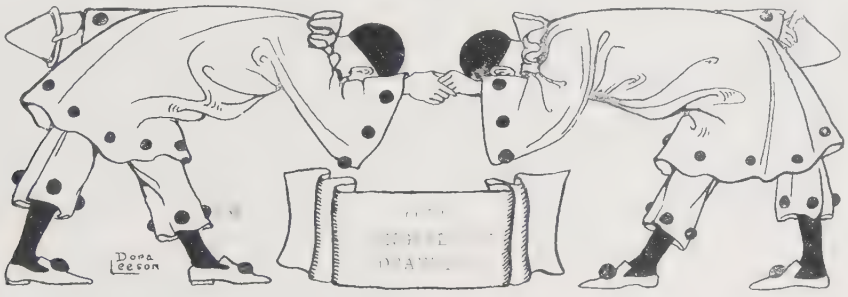
The first step is to choose your picture to copy, and as a beginner it would be as well to select one with as little detail as possible, and with broad, bold lines. This will not, of course, please those who are young and ambitious, but it is sound advice, especially in this case where a little practice is required to fit the pieces together. These can be cut large or small according to fancy, each piece being cut as it is required. Boys will use a keen penknife, but I fancy girls will find a sharp pair of embroidery scissors more to their taste. When you have fixed on your subject —which can be well chosen from among the many chromos of good pictures—draw the pattern (or the idle may trace it) on paper, which should, according to M. van Wiljick, be fairly thin. The infinitesimal morsels of stamps are put on the paper with a fine pair of pointed pincers, and it would seem to be as well to work from the edges towards the centres, so that if there should by chance be

A PICTURE AFTER BOUCHER.

... s 22 inches by 19 inches, and occupied M. van Wiljick for nine months.

any overlapping, it would not give the effect of a hollow. Care must be taken to keep exactly to outlines, otherwise when you reach the centre you will find yourself obliged to leave out some important detail from want of space. Ordinary gum may be used to affix the stamps, but M. van Wiljick prefers to make his own, which he mixes with cellulose, vinegar, a little spirit, and—so that this should not be too brittle—he adds a little sugar. When the picture is finished the paper with its layer of stamps is mounted on a piece of cardboard, and this again is fixed on a piece of metal, zinc or copper, to keep it flat.

Over this two or three layers of gelatine are laid so as to prevent the varnish from penetrating the paper, of which the stamps are composed. This is covered again with some of the best carriage varnish, and all is finished. The varnish is applied to keep the colour of the stamps from fading, and also to preserve them from the damp.



"THE COURTSHIP OF MILES STANDISH."

The subject of our Frontispiece this month.

"THE Courtship of Miles Standish" is one of the most charming idylls Longfellow has written. It is an idyll of friendship and of love. The friendship of two men, the love of two men for one woman. Miles Standish, the Puritan captain, broad shouldered, deep chested, "with muscles and sinews of iron," whose russet beard, "Flaked with patches of snow, as hedges sometimes in November," has John Alden for friend and household companion. "Youngest of all was he of the men who came in the *Mayflower*." They are sitting together, and John Alden is writing letters home to England. His letters are full of the tidings of the terrible winter, and also "Full of the name and fame of the Puritan maiden, Priscilla." To him Miles Standish suddenly confesses his love for her, "the loveliest maiden of Plymouth," and commissions the youth to go to her, and in "elegant language," such as he has the secret of, to tell her of his love. John Alden, feeling his heart stop beating, "Just as a timepiece stops, in a house that is stricken by lightning," tries to put off the commission, but Miles Standish asks him to do so in the name of friendship. Then John Alden sets forth, and goes through the perfumed woods, and as he goes he plucks the mayflowers that fill the air with a wonderful fragrance, until he comes to the home of the Puritan maiden. He finds her sitting beside her wheel, carding the wool like a snow drift, and singing the Old Hundredth Psalm, and John Alden enters and gives her the flowers. Together they sit for a while speaking of the hedgerows of England, and the maiden tells of her solitude. John Alden then blurts out his message, the offer of marriage of Miles Standish. He takes no heed of her astonished interruption as he urges his suit.

> "But as he warmed and glowed, in his simple and eloquent language,
> Quite forgetful of self and full of the praise of his rival,
> Archly the maiden smiled, and, with eyes overrunning with laughter,
> Said, in a tremulous voice, 'Why don't you speak for yourself, John?'"

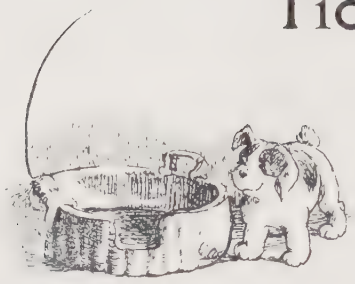
Then he flies from her presence, and returning to Miles Standish tells the result of his embassy. The Captain of Plymouth in his rage charges John Alden with treachery. The Indians are giving trouble, and with fury in his heart he sets off in pursuit of them. Months elapse, and news reaches the settlement that he has been killed, and John Alden and Priscilla are now free to marry. The wedding-day dawns, and—

> "Lo, when the service was ended a form appeared on the threshold
> Clad in armour of steel, a sombre and sorrowful figure."

This is Miles Standish come back. The reconciliation with the lovers and the description of the wedding procession brings the lovely poem to a close.

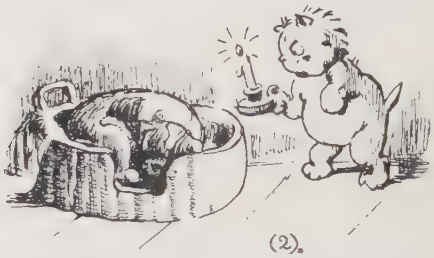
Tiddlekins and Bobby.

A CAT AND DOG STORY.



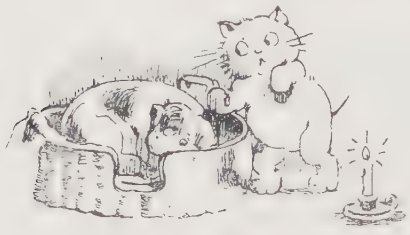
(1).

Bobby: "This basket looks comfy. Guess I'll get in."



(2).

Tiddlekins' mother says she is to have nothing to do with Bobby, because he is a dog, and has such rude, rough ways. But what is she to do? Here is Bobby in her bed.



(3).

And Tiddlekins is very sleepy. She gives the intruder a little poke . . . Tiddlekins finds that Bobby asleep—

(4).

And Bobby awake are different persons.

(5).

Tiddlekins weeps while Bobby snores. Tiddlekins doesn't hear her mother come softly downstairs. Nor does Bobby—

(6).

—Until it is too late. Then he sees stars, and feels all sorts of things.

"I am glad *my* mother hasn't nasty prickly toes," thinks Bobby, as he sadly mounts the stairs.

(7).

SYBIL C. BURNSIDE.

Flower Clubs.

A Charming Idea carried out at some Girls' Schools.

By KATHLEEN WALDRON.

A GIRL GARDENER AT THE ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE, EGHAM.

At most of the large schools and colleges some provision is made for a more practical knowledge of plants and flowers than that to be gained from a pedantic acquaintance with their Latin names or from studying with the help of a microscope. Sometimes all that is thought of are the "allotments," or small pieces of ground given to individual pupils. Occasionally in connection with these competitions are held, and a prize given for the best kept garden. But in any case among keen gardeners there is always the very human desire to make one's own particular patch more successful than one's neighbours'. And then, branching off from clubs connected with gardening itself, there are those which lead to an acquaintance with the plant life of the fields and woods. It is, indeed, one very pleasant feature of modern school and college life that in spite of all the hard work and all the athletic enthusiasm, the quieter pleasures connected with flowers should not have been lost sight of. From the very first, the women's colleges seem to have placed their students in direct connection with the love of flowers, for the majority have chosen a flower for their special badge. At Girton it is the daisy. Why, no one exactly knows. Perhaps because it is so conspicuous on the vivid green of the grass plots about the college buildings. The daffodil was probably selected as the Newnham badge because it is the most plentiful flower at commemoration time. Marguerites are easily enough thought of in connection with Lady Margaret Hall at Oxford, and the motto, "Ex solo ad solem," refers aptly both to the flower and to the name of the college. Since the fritillary grows so luxuriantly about Oxford meadows, and is so rare in other parts of England, it is natural enough that the Oxford colleges should as a whole have adopted that flower. Many will have heard of it as the name of their magazine. A lovely idea is that of the House of Education at Ambleside, which has the rush for its emblem, rush-brown and green being the colours of the school. At Westfield the honeysuckle is the flower emblem. Although the Girton daisy may figure on the tennis challenge cup it has never, we believe,

been worn as a badge, nor has the Newnham daffodil or the Oxford fritillary. The use of an embroidered flower badge is seen alone in the rose of the Royal Holloway College. The colours of this college are also taken from the rose, and it seems, therefore, rather fitting that it should be here that one of the most interesting flower clubs exists.

The head-quarters of this club is a huge table in the beautiful library. Each member owns a vase, and whenever flowers are to be found each member undertakes to keep her vase arranged with fresh flowers, writing on a slip of paper not only the botanical names of the specimens included, but their popular English names as well. A scheme of this sort might be adopted in any school, where it would not only help to beautify the rooms, but would help both the members of the club and casual passers-by to glean some valuable knowledge of wild flowers. It would certainly add very much to the interest of country walks. But besides this club, there is at Holloway an annual competition in flower-knowledge open to the whole college. The competitors are divided into pairs, and in a quarter of an hour they have to write down the popular names of one hundred specimens arranged round a large lecture room. The prize is given to the pair who name the greatest number correctly, and is awarded by the botany lecturer and the students preparing for the B.Sc. final. For a fortnight before the competition the botany lecturer conducts a walk every day for the purpose of pointing out and naming the various plants as they are passed by. Intending competitors follow, taking notes, and collecting specimens, the plants occasionally imprinting their memory on "fleshy tablets" when they happen to be thorns or thistles.

A FLOWER-TABLE AT THE ROYAL HOLLOWAY COLLEGE.

At the Cheltenham Ladies' College there is a flourishing society known as the Field Club, which includes archæological, botanical and microscopical, geological and zoological sections. A very sensible rule enacts that no member may belong to more than two sections during the same year. Expeditions are organised by the botanical section to search in the woods and fields for the different plants that may be expected in different neighbourhoods. Then, during the holidays, the girls make further additions to the whole collection, which is shown on the occasion of an annual soirée, when a paper on some naturalistic subject is read. Each specimen is either shown dried, or in a vase, and each is, of course, named. The zoological society, it may be remarked, is not for the purpose of collecting the peaceful or pugnacious cattle of the ordinary English field, which might seem at first sight to be the only available specimens. Newts, and the many fascinating creatures to be fished up from ponds and ditches are part of the booty,

and on one occasion a special expedition was made to Cooper's Hill for some Roman snails. The society as a whole, in fact, is an assurance that Cheltenham girls need not be without that interest in the life of the fields and hedges which is so naturally acquired by girls living in the country. The girl who is unobservant and ignorant out-of-doors is not only deprived of out-of-door pleasure, but can scarcely enjoy or understand a very large part of literature. It is hard to imagine that pitiable colour-blindness which sees only the black and white printed letters spelling "primrose," and Wordsworth's carter, to whom the flower was at least "yellow," is in better case. A primrose is, it is true, known to those most ignorant of botany nowadays, but in poetry the names of flowers are most often used to call up some particular surrounding, and this can never be vividly appreciated by those who are quite ignorant of the places in which different flowers are found. Shelley's Sensitive Plant is a strong instance of an effect gained by such word painting. And who that has never been a gardener can enjoy that sweetest of all his essays in which Bacon revels in the "Purest of Human Pleasyres"?

Those who think of starting flower or gardening clubs may possibly find help from this description of the principal clubs of the sort already in existence. But many other varieties might be tried. Instead of writing out the names of given specimens, if this were found to be too easy in the case of specimens obtainable, fewer than a hundred might be selected, and the competitors might write down in what sort of situations and on what sort of soil it would be most likely that the specimens would be found. In the holidays an interesting plan for the members of a botanical club is that each one shall write down the names of as many flowers as she can find in her neighbourhood. If the holidays are spent at different places this is always an interesting pastime. At schools where there is not enough ground for "allotments," the ordinary flower beds of the garden could be undertaken by a club, and while some general scheme of planting would have to be agreed on, it would be a matter of desire with each member that her own particular part of the beds should be successful. At one time there was, we believe, a scheme of this sort in practice at Lady Margaret Hall. A window-box club was at one time started in one of the London Colleges, and in this direction there is room for development.

Result of the Emerson Literary Essay Competition in the February Number.

THE essay on Emerson has been very popular, a great many papers have come in, some of which are excellent both for style and for the power of reasoning displayed. In a great many the language is somewhat stilted as if my girls could not quite get away from the influence of that of the master mind they were studying. As a whole, however, I am very much interested in the numerous papers that have reached me. The best essay is by Honor Batchelor, 7, Lansdowne Place, Blackheath, to whom is awarded the First Prize of 10/6. It is impossible to print it owing to lack of space. I will, however, sum it up for you. Honor does not like Emerson, either his essay on Friendship, or his style. "I have read and re-read Emerson on Friendship" she says, "seeking what he promises to give us, 'a noble and true conceit of God-like amity.' A first perusal left me floundering helplessly in the mazes of a style of thought aptly described as 'mysticism in Epigrams'—a bewildering gloom of mysticism broken by lightning flashes of epigram, vivid, fascinating, but utterly inadequate to a full illumination of the ultimate teaching of the essay." She then enters into its analysis, and sums it up by saying, "It is not friendship we have been discussing but the 'aboriginal Self.' While affirming that friendship is based on truth and tenderness, Emerson declares over and over again, 'a friend is a picture and effigy of one's own soul,' 'the semblance of one's being under a foreign form,' a mere 'planet.'" With something of resentment "Honor" takes down Bacon's noble essay on friendship, and finds that far more in accord with the definition given of friendship by the Hebrew sage of old. The essay is an altogether stimulating and independent view of Emerson, and it is as such that I give it the prize in the first class. I have always said that I did not wish my girls to be under any sense of obligation to praise an author simply because I recommended him. I want the true opinion of all girls after their mature study and thought of the writer.

The next best essay is by Hetty Pepper. This writer takes a totally different view from Honor Batchelor's. She thinks that Emerson's conception is "too idealistic, too sweet and ethereal for the rush and hurry of modern life," quoting Emerson's own words, 'Friends such as we desire are dreams and fables.' 'We all pass our life in the search after true friendship, and yet are half afraid to sound its unknown depths; suppose it were shallow water after all. So it is better to imagine one's friend the ideal and visionary friend of one's dreams than to be disappointed in him.' Emerson feels that doubt, but he refuses to become 'a prey to this cobweb of his fancy.' 'Trust thyself' is his watchword. He believes that every heart vibrates to that iron string." The sum of Hetty Pepper's essay is "that the rock on which friendship must be built, if it be worthy of that great and noble name, is mutual trust."

"Na-dhor-dhull's" essay comes next. "Kirkpatrick" also writes a very intelligent essay. There are other good essays by Winifred Rance, Cicily Chadwick, "Vodka," who writes a very thoughtful essay. Lilian Henniker's essay has also a touch of individuality in her comparison of her idea of friendship with that of the great American. Lilian Henniker's ideal seems to me to be far more human, but Emerson's is the more ideal. "White Violet," in a charming essay, compares "Friendship" as it is conceived by Emerson and by Marcus Aurelius.

I would also mention essays by Nina Cook, Beatrice Trefusis, Eva Simpson, Margaret K. Swayne-Edwards, May M. Mackay, Violet Legge, Winifred French, Florence Piercy Jones, "Semper Eadem," Mary J. de Lautour, May Timms, Isabel Gillmer (no age given), Ethel Mitton, Jean Macnair, Marjorie Ashworth.

The best set of six quotations on Friendship, with reasons for their choice, sent in by the second class, is by Ethel Cook (aged 15), Leighton House School, Cromer, Norfolk, to whom the prize of 5s. is awarded. The next two best are by Katherine Ethel Harman and Dorothy Willis. These three papers run each other close. It is difficult to say which girl has chosen the best quotations. I have chosen Ethel Cook's because the reasons she gives for her choice are the most satisfactory.

P P

HOW TO FURNISH A GIRL'S DEN.

By Mrs. C. S. PEEL.

With special Illustrations by
C. M. A. Peake.

A COSY DIVAN FOR THE GIRL'S DEN.
This Divan can be made inexpensively.

In a previous article I described how the walls and woodwork of a room may be papered and painted, the floor stained, and a pretty overmantel erected at but small cost in money, though, it is true, at the expense of much time and labour. But what girl would grudge either if the result is a cosy sitting-room—a place in which to read, to sew, and to follow her own devices undisturbed?

Now, although with the papering, painting, and floor-staining accomplished the hardest part of our task is over, much remains to be done before the comfortable sanctum to which we aspire is complete. It may not be possible to furnish the room at once. Possibly kind relatives will come to the fore with gifts of furniture, or a sympathetic mother allow various articles to be gleaned from other rooms. If so, do not be stiff and proud; take whatever is offered to you, for there is scarcely any oddment so old or so decrepit that it cannot be renovated and put to some use.

The attainment of a carpet may prove no easy matter. Should there not be an old floor covering which we may "commandeer," the boards must be stained all over, well polished, and partly hidden by two or three cheap Japanese rugs. These, though they cost but some 5s. each, are artistic in colouring, thick, and durable. It may be, however, that the boards are ill-fitted and uneven, and, therefore, unsuitable for staining. In this case we must save our money until we can purchase an Abingdon Card Carpet. The makers are the Abingdon Carpet Company, Abingdon-on-Thames; and the carpets are good-looking and quite inexpensive, one sufficiently large to cover the greater part of a room of moderate size costing from 14s. to 18s.

The effect of the various patterns of carpet should be tried in the room, and do not forget that the colour of curtains and coverings, as well as the colour of the walls, must be taken into account when making your choice.

Generally speaking, walls and carpets of the following colours look well together:—

Yellow walls - Goblin blue, olive green, coppery red carpet;
Red walls - Green, or dull blue carpet;
Green walls - Green, dull blue, or red carpet;
Blue walls - Tan, green, or copper red carpet.

In a small room a plain or flat-patterned paper should be used.

Where there is a scarcity of pictures or wall

ornaments a bolder design may be employed, but in a small room, even though the design is bold, the colouring should not be of the bouncing order.

And now from generalities let us pass on to the contemplation of the sketch on page 601; a simple but picturesque method of treating a commonplace window is shown. Shelves are fitted underneath, thereby forming a book-case and wide window ledge. These shelves are of deal, and a working carpenter would provide them and put them together for a few shillings. The painting you can do yourself, and it should match in colour the other woodwork of the room. This projecting book-shelf breaks the straight line of wall and window, and in order to do so still more effectually the board of the curtain valance should be made to protrude as far, or nearly as far, as the book case.

Fixed to this board, but hanging an inch or so below it, there should be a curved iron rod on which to hang the short curtains. Our room shall contain no dust traps in the form of draperies, therefore the valance is so arranged that it may be quickly taken down for cleaning purposes and as quickly replaced. To achieve this end the flounce should be cut out, joined, hemmed at the lower edge, turned down at the top, tacked, and then gathered on to a strip of Petersham binding the exact length of the board. The drapery may now be nailed into place, using only just as many of the tacks as are required to keep it taut. These nails may be removed, the flounce shaken, and again nailed into place in a very few minutes. The curtains, which reach to the window ledge only, should also be gathered on to a piece of Petersham; but it is not necessary to allow as much fulness as you allowed in the valance. The curtains are gathered in order that they may hang in graceful folds when drawn across the window at night, while the Petersham forms a substantial foundation to which the curtain rings on hooks may be sewn. The latter should be of a size to slip easily over the rod.

For the outer curtains there are many suitable materials at low prices: double width serge at 1s. 4½d. and 1s. 6½d. a yard, cretonne, chintz, Friesland velvet, and many designs in hemp brocade, which costs from 1s. 4½d. to 1s. 11½d. a yard double width. The coloured linens generally sold for lining purposes also make up into pretty frilled curtains, and the material, about 30 inches wide, costs but some 7d. or 8d. a yard.

Did you notice that the walls of the room in the first article are covered with a plain paper? This being so, the curtains are figured, but had the walls been hung with a patterned paper the curtains should then be plain. Too many patterns in a room give a muddled unrestful effect—a fact which one wishes were more generally recognised.

Now let us pause and review the situation. We have through our exertions a clean, freshly-papered and painted room, a carpeted or rug-strewn floor, and an overmantel. The window is draped with curtains, both thick and thin, and there are shelves for our favourite books. Surely we may now sit down and rest while we decide what next must be done. Sit down—a good idea; but where are the chairs? The sofa?

It is evident, then, without further thought,

A RESTFUL ARM-CHAIR.

Which is merely a cheap deck chair tastefully covered in brocade.

that the provision of sitting accommodation must be our next task.

Upholstered, or even cushioned wicker arm-chairs are beyond our purse; yet arm-chairs we will have. In illustration No. II. a comfortable and by no means unsightly arm-chair is shown, the foundation of which is merely a canvas-seated deck chair, price 1s. 11½d.; or, if you wish for a larger or stronger kind, 2s. 11½d.

When buying the chair select one which is covered with plain Indian red canvas. Now, with coarse sandpaper, remove all the varnish from the woodwork, and re-stain or paint it oak, brown, green, or ivory white, then leave until perfectly dry. Meanwhile buy one yard of double width brocade in a colouring which harmonises with the red canvas. Cut it into two pieces, and with one cover a cushion. Cut the remaining piece in half, turn in the edges and baste them into place, hem the lower edge of each piece and trim it with fringe. Now tack both pieces into position as shown in the sketch, seam the edges of brocade and canvas together, hide the tin tacks by a row of flat gilt-headed nails or a band of gimp, and you will have achieved as pretty and cheap an arm-chair as you can wish for.

But as, with all our care, the two easy chairs you need for your den will have cost about 8s. to 10s., and as we still need other seats, I will now tell you how you may make a box ottoman at even less expense. These ottomans form comfortable writing-table seats or music stools, and their foundation consists of a strong wooden case, such as groceries or bottles are packed in. If a suitable box—and it may be long and narrow or square—is not to be found in the house, the local grocer will no doubt supply one for a few pence.

The first thing to be done is to cleanse the case thoroughly, and then, if you can afford the small outlay, buy four castors and screw them to the four corners. Still, castors may be regarded as a luxury, and, in consequence, may be dispensed with if coin of the realm is scarce. Now you must decide if you will make an ottoman, in which you may keep work, music, etc., or merely a seat. If the latter, remove the lid and turn the box upside down. Now take sufficient material to cover the sides, and fasten it with tin tacks along the top; then strain it under the edge of the box at the bottom. Cut a piece of unbleached calico (or any other strong stuff you may have at hand) a little larger than the ottoman top. Turn it in and nail it into place along three sides. Now pad the wood with flock, pushing it under the calico until that fabric is stuffed out to the last gasp. Nail the fourth side into place, and then cover with the material, making all neat by means of a piece of gimp. If you desire a real ottoman, and not merely a seat, then the lid must be hinged (hinges are cheap and easily put on) to the box, and the lid padded and covered. In this case it will be best to finish off the top cover with a little frill, with which to hide the junction between lid and box.

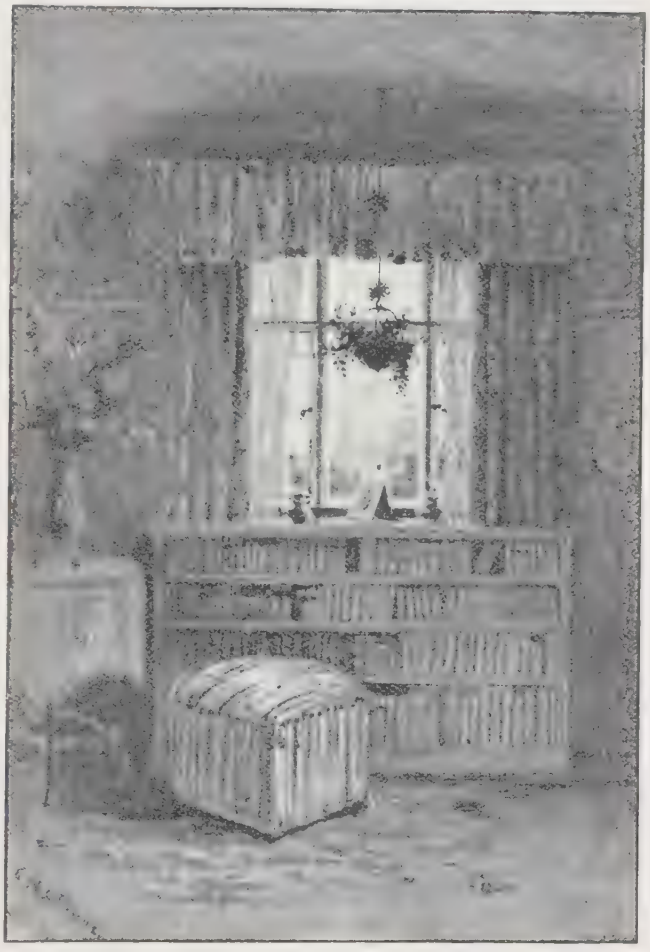
Two yards of double width fabric will suffice to cover an ottoman 18 inches square or 24 inches long by 18 wide. If hemp brocade at 1s. 4½d. is used, the cost will be 2s. 9d. But even this outlay may be saved if you can beg an old curtain, table, or chair cover sufficiently large for your purpose. If your treasure is made of serge or cloth it may be washed and re-dyed with Dolly Dye (procurable at almost any grocers), and will then look quite smart.

You, of course, are not girls who wish to loll on a sofa all day; still there are times when lolling is permissible, and nothing is so comfortable for that purpose as a large, soft, well-cushioned divan. Such a piece of furniture also does much to make a room look furnished, which is a consideration when we cannot afford to buy sofas, tables and cabinets galore.

In the first illustration you see a long divan which reaches from the fireplace to the nearest corner. No matter what shape our seat is to be, curved round a bow window, V shaped, to fit into an angle, or straight, as in the sketch, the principle on which it is made is the same. I am afraid that I cannot promise you that the cost will be less than £2. When, therefore, we can afford to order our divan, the carpenter must be instructed to make a low frame-work of deal. To be really comfortable, this frame should be at least 20 inches wide and the legs at the back should be one inch shorter than those in front, so that the seat slopes slightly towards the wall. The height of the

frame in front should be 13 or 14 inches. The frame-work is merely a skeleton, across which strips of webbing are nailed at intervals of a couple of inches. On these the mattress rests. The legs of the seat are hidden by a frill of the covering material, which may be nailed on to the wood-work or sewed very firmly to the edge of the cushion. Referring to an old bill, I find that the carpenter charged me £1 for fitting up a strong deal frame-work with cross-bars of webbing for a large bow-window. Any upholsterer will make a buttoned-down flock mattress to fit such a seat, and the further covering of it is an easy matter, as the outer material should not be buttoned-down but strained tightly over the mattress. If a back is wanted for the seat, the upholsterer (there is no reason, you know, that the upholsterer should not be you or your brother), must make a cushion of the desired shape and size, sewing to the back of it about two inches below the top edge, a strong casing of holland or calico, through which a stout wooden lath can be slipped; this lath should then be fitted with rings at each end, and nailed or screwed to the wall. Often, however, the backing may be dispensed with, and a supply of cushions take its place.

Do you not admire the whole effect of sketch No. I.? That arrangement of cupboard and shelf is so effective. Yet the cupboard is but one of those which one buys ready-made at any white wood store. The cupboard in the illustration is decorated in a simple but most effective manner. The wood, with the exception of the panels, is stained green, the design is traced off on to the panel, and the background dented all over with a bradawl or any other sharp tool, and painted over with Judson's gold. The design should now be filled in with red and green oil paint, and boldly outlined with black paint. Then, when the hinges and lock-plate of brass or copper are on, the result is excellent.



A PICTURESQUE METHOD OF TREATING A COMMONPLACE WINDOW.

I fear it is now time that this article came to an end, although our room is not complete; we have neither writing-table, tea-table, nor ornaments. Under these circumstances, I shall say *au revoir* and not *adieu*, for I want your room to be perfect before I leave you to its enjoyment.

"First Loves."

"Nous changeons d'objets mais la passion reste."

ARABELLA.

Your coal black hair,
Your vacant stare,
My first love and my queerest!
Your wooden legs,
Your arms like pegs,
How much I loved you, dearest!

STELLA.

Your flaxen curls,
Your teeth like pearls,
My fourth "first love," perfection!
Your jerky walk,
Your squeaky talk,
How brief was our affection!

ETTA.

You thing of rags,
Of scraps and tags,
My second love—my Etta!
You lost your charms,
And both your arms,
But still I loved you better.

DICK.

Your pretty song,
Your voice so strong,
My fifth "first love," you pet, you!
I cried all day,
When sad to say,
My trusted pussy ate you!

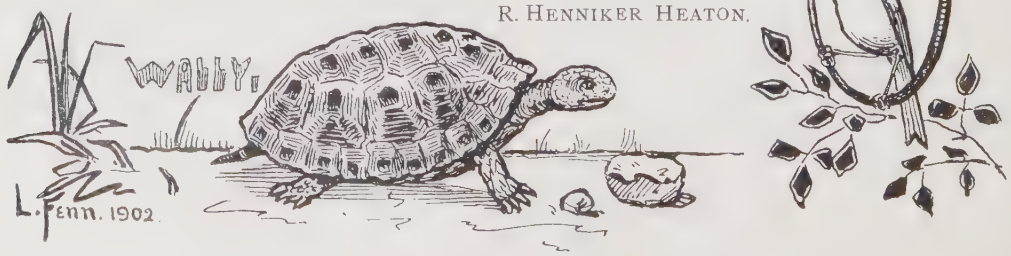
TOPSY.

You waved your hand,
Your face you fanned,
My third love, Popsy Wopsy!
But by one stroke,
Your springs I broke,
And ceased to love you, Topsy.

WALLY.

My knight of old,
My tortus bold!
My last "first love," ah, pardon!
These tears they flow,
Because you know,
You burrowed in the garden

R. HENNIKER HEATON.



A HEAVILY EMBROIDERED PILLOW-SHAM.

A WHITE LINEN BABY PILLOW.

On the Embroidering of Household Linens.

By LILIAN BARTON-WILSON.

"White-work" is not so general a term as one might suppose it to be. The name has been, by centuries of use, confined to embroidery done with cottons, usually on white linen grounds and after the method more correctly known as satin stitch.

Its most practical application is in lettering. The very clear and artistic sampler shown here is a complete study in itself, and will enable one to become self-taught in this dainty needlework. This is exceedingly satisfactory embroidery for linens which are to be washed. Many of our silks are fast colours, but even with that guarantee they need to be laundered with care. This is true to a certain extent of all embroideries, but certainly this work is as near to being altogether serviceable as it is possible for embroidery to be.

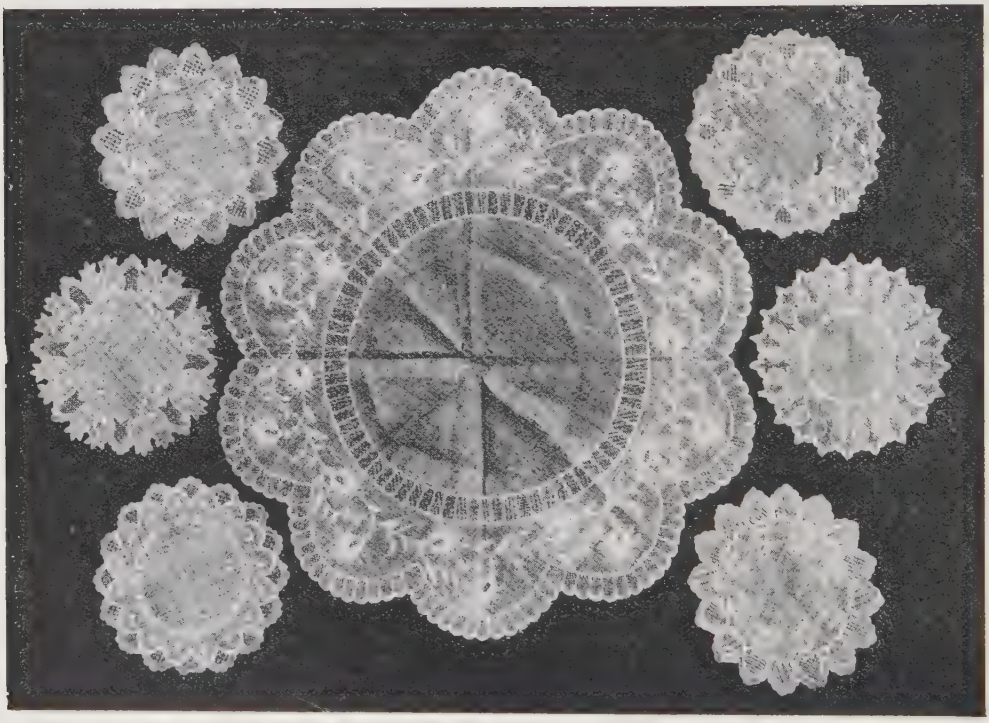
The work on household linens such as table-cloths, napkins, tray-cloths, towels, etc., should be done in "French working cotton," and, by-the-way, the best quality is labelled "made in Germany."

Initialling is both ornamental and useful. No doubt many girls could find time to so ornament their household linens, but the right way to go about the work is wanting. It is not difficult embroidery; on the other hand, it is certainly not sewing, and there is a proper way to do it. The material should be stretched either in a hoop or basted over stiff paper so that the stitches can be placed with perfect uniformity. When the linen is heavy, such as table damask, the hoop is better. One who learns to work on it with both hands, sending the needle up and down, will be repaid by the ease which she will acquire. On light lawns the stiff-paper method may be used, and the work done in and out, the entire stitch laid at a stroke, for the paper will prevent the lawn from pulling. This is the way in which the fine French handkerchiefs are embroidered. The design of the dainty lawn pillow illustrated here is artistic, yet so simple that it can be readily followed. The rule for the stitch direction in letters or in such forms as this clover is the same, but, in the first place, the under filling is of especial importance, for this embroidery is raised.

It is impossible to do good work with the covering stitches unless the under filling is carefully done. It should be carried *lengthwise* of a form or with its direction. The first set of stitches can be long, and when these are

evenly laid they should be bound in with slanting stitches from side to side. Great care should be taken, in the first place, to lay an equal quantity of cotton over the surface, and in the second to keep all well within the outline. One may raise the work in this way just a little as on the baby pillow, or firm and high as the letters of the sampler and the work on the beautiful pillow-sham are done. The form must be wide enough to permit of this raising, however. Stems or single lines can be most satisfactorily worked over a single thread.

This is the foundation of technique in embroidery, and in some kinds of work it is a very complicated question, but as applied to French white-work it is a very definite and unmistakable principle even to amateurs. Always the stitches should be placed at right angles to the direction of the form, whether it be composed of straight or curved lines. It is indeed an over and over work, and to lay the stitch at right angles will be to span the form by the shortest possible distance. Look at the sampler and note how the direction of the stitches



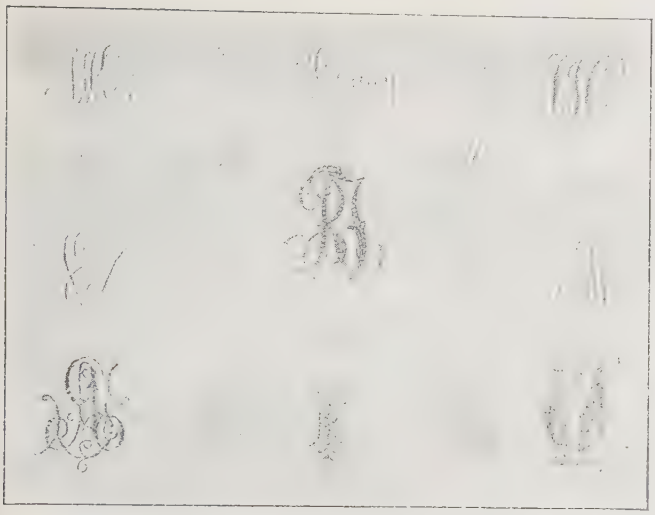
EMBROIDERED WHITE CENTRE AND DOILIES.

The second step in this embroidery is the over-work. These stitches are made to cover the *width* of the letters or vines or ornaments from side to side, entirely without shading and with perfect regularity. It is not always that such definite rules for embroidery can be laid down as in this particular instance, but as it is a kind of work chiefly dependent upon accuracy for its beauty, it is therefore quite possible to state in what respects it shall be accurate.

The first essential to the correctness of all embroidery is the direction of the stitches. bears always the same relation to the direction of the curves of the letters. If the form is wide it is necessary to divide it into two or more bars or sections, as in the clover leaves. By embroidering these bars separately the stitches are short, and the work is consequently firm.

The exquisite centre-piece and doilies illustrated here show how wonderfully fine this embroidery, so well suited even to coarse towels, may be made. This work is equal in fineness to lace or Mexican drawn-work.

The lovely pieces are full of suggestions to



SAMPLES OF LETTERING FOR LINENS.

amateur workers, and all the delicate designs can be embroidered in the hand if the fine linen is first basted to heavy paper. The scallops of the various doilies are a study in themselves; one may apply these to any linens with advantage.

The way in which the French knots are introduced into the dark letters of the sampler is very clever and economical. The seed stitch used in the beautiful piece of bed linen is also a way of getting over the ground without too much work, and without making the general effect too heavy. This piece of embroidery is particularly rich. The letters are sufficiently large to permit the worker to get a clear idea of how the stitches should be placed, and the cone corner design is full of instruction to one who will use her eyes.

A very little practice enables one to do this work evenly, and it, together with hem-stitching, will give the every-day linens that very dainty touch which makes a bit of art and beauty a part of the home atmosphere. Initialling alone is often sufficient. The proper size for an initial or crest on a napkin is one to two inches, on the corner of the table-cloth four inches. This letter should be placed on the cloth just where it turns the corner of the table on top. On sheets the initial should be placed in the centre of the width and about one inch from the bottom of the top hem. A little colour may be used in marking towels if one wishes.

Hem-stitching and white-work are always a pretty combination; they are both pleasant leisure work, and the time will be well spent in a very practical as well as decorative needle-work.

"GIRL'S REALM" NEEDLEWORK DESIGNS.—II.

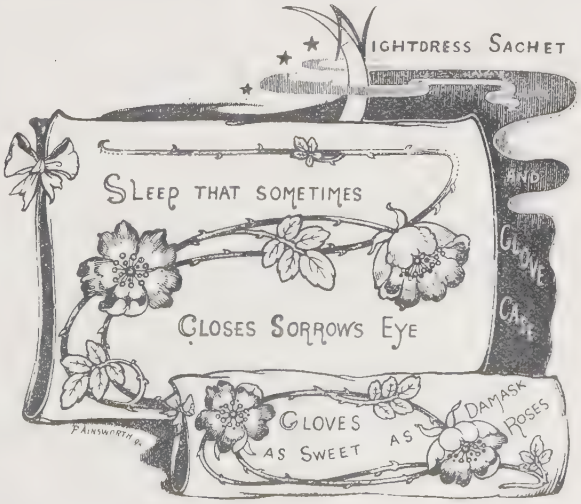
THE accompanying sketch is a conventional rendering of roses, and a pleasing scheme in which to work them would be a ground of sea-green linen upon which the flowers were worked in pink, starting from the outer side of the petals shading lighter towards the centre; this should be done in long and short stitch.

The stamens of the roses and the lettering of the "Mottoes" should be worked in yellow, the former with carefully made French knots, and the latter in stem stitch.

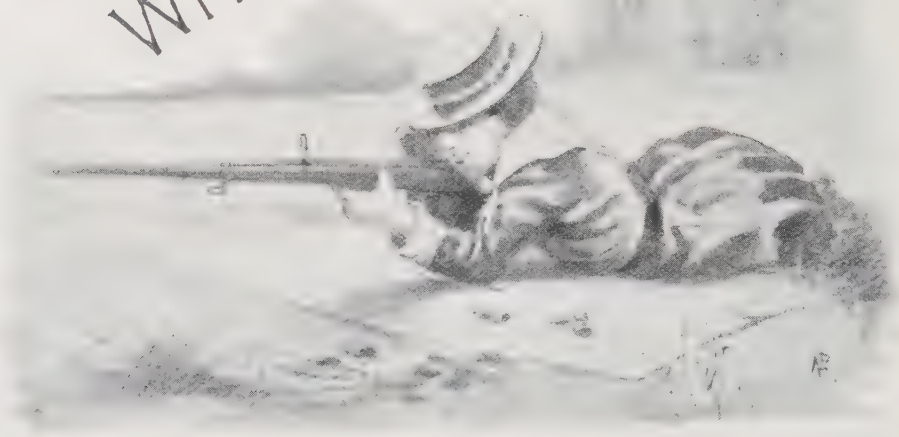
Now remain the leaves and stems, to be worked in brown-greens, with dark touches where the stems go behind the flowers; and a charming piece of work is finished.

These designs would also look well worked entirely in white, on a white ground, and of course would wash admirably.

Mr. Philip Ainsworth, whose address is given in the pages of this Magazine, and who originates these designs, will trace them (inexpensively) on any material, if communicated with.



GIRLS WITH THE GUN



MISS "RENNIER" (LILIAN HOLCROFT): A FAMOUS GIRL-SHOT.
A sketch made at Bisley.

WHO HAVE WON FAME AT THE TARGETS.

By GEORGE A. WADE.

Shooting with the rifle or revolver is not a sport that one would suppose commended itself to girls of the present day, but the fact remains, nevertheless, that some girls of our own times can hold their own in shooting with many of our most noted men "shots." And there is equally little doubt that shooting, as a pastime for ladies, is steadily on the increase.

The palm for using the rifle amongst British women must be awarded to Miss Winifred Leale, the celebrated girl from Guernsey, who makes a practice of putting in an appearance each year at Bisley to compete against the picked shots of the Kingdom and the Colonies. Miss Leale rarely returns to her island home without taking with her many trophies won by her skill in using the rifle.

Miss Leale began to shoot in 1891, and the beginning was, in a way, quite accidental. She had accompanied her father, a noted shot, to a local rifle meeting, when someone asked her to have a "pot" at the target. But Miss Leale was modest and shy, and had no desire to exhibit her ignorance of shooting. So she declined. She was pressed to do so many times, however, and she at last consented. With her trial shot she made an "inner." There was loud applause from the bystanders, many of whom urged the girl to continue using the rifle, telling her that she had evidently an inherited talent for shooting. But Miss Leale refused at that time to shoot again, and it was only later that she began to practise in the island, where many facilities for target-shooting exist.

Miss Leale uses the ordinary service weapon that Government regulations dictate, though she much prefers the Lee-Metford to the Martini rifle. Indeed, she feels handicapped when having to use the latter. Her best record was when she made ninety-eight points out of the possible hundred-and-five, and she fires at all the usual lengths measured at Bisley, two, five, six, and nine hundred yards.

Of prizes for shooting she has a large number, most of them, if not all, gained in competition with men, for there are not sufficient prominent markswomen to make it worth while

to have special contests for them at the various important rifle meetings.

There are two great necessaries, she thinks, for any girl who would achieve success as a rifle-shot, namely, excellent eyesight and constant practice. Miss Leale is a native of Guernsey, and was educated at the Ladies' College there.

Bisley a year or two ago experienced another sensation in the appearance at the annual contest of Miss Lilian Rennier, who shared the honours of the week, as far as ladies were concerned, with Miss Winifred Leale. The "old stagers" of the meeting expected the attendance of the Guernsey maiden as a matter of course, but they had not anticipated that a girl-shot from the Transvaal would patronise their meeting. She came, however, in the person of Miss Rennier.

MISS SANNIE KRUGER: WHO EXCELS AS A REVOLVER SHOT.
Miss Kruger is the niece of ex-President Kruger.

Her real name is Lilian Holcroft; she merely uses "Rennier" as a professional name under which to shoot. Her father is the well-known Captain Holcroft, who lectured some time ago in London upon the Transvaal and its armaments. Captain Holcroft is an Englishman who has lived many years in South Africa, and he is an authority upon guns and shooting. He had a famous invention of a machine-gun, which he offered to the Transvaal Government before the war broke out, but they did not buy it. Perhaps it is as well they refused.

Miss Holcroft's marksmanship won her many friends at Bisley. She scored higher than her girl rival from Guernsey, at one range, at any rate, for she made no less than 103 out of the 105 possible points. In the Transvaal Miss Holcroft has a great reputation; among the best of her successes is that of winning a gold medal for shooting at a match held at Pretoria some time before the war broke out. The presentation of the medal to her was made amidst loud cheers by the then President, Mr. Kruger. One has only to remember what "dead-shots" the Boers have proved themselves with the rifle, to get a really true idea of the ability of this girl, who can meet the crack marksmen of the Transvaal and beat them in fair and even competition.

Miss Holcroft's eye gives one the impression of being quicker at getting the "sight" of the target than does Miss Leale's; in build she is not nearly so tall as her Guernsey rival. She has a graceful easy attitude whilst lying down to shoot, and seems as calm and collected about it as though it were her every-day work.

Speaking of the Transvaal reminds me that one of the very finest lady-shots in the world is Miss Sannie Kruger, niece of the late President. Miss Kruger prefers the revolver to the rifle, indeed, with the latter in hand she is not half so deadly a shot. Miss Kruger, with her brother, set out some time ago for Arizona, in Western America, to look after a mine in which her family had an interest; they had not been long there before they decided that they would not return to the Transvaal, but settle in Arizona for good. Miss Kruger still keeps up her shooting practice, indeed, she can give points at that pastime to most of the crack backwoodsmen shooters of the district, who are not slow to acknowledge her prowess with their favourite weapon, the revolver.

Photo. C. M. Bacon.

A READER OF "THE GIRL'S REALM" (CICELY J. BACON) AT PRACTICE AT THE TARGETS.

She is a girl of middle height, rather dark-featured, and with a good-natured, pleasant face.

The Duchess of Newcastle is a first-rate shot, who can boast of having once saved her husband from a terrible death by her skill in rifle-shooting. The Duchess, who still looks little more than a girl, has spent many days shooting big game in the Rocky Mountains, in North America, with the Duke. It was on these mountains that the latter had the misfortune to be overtaken by a bear, which violently attacked him. The Duke fired at it, but, missing it, only enraged the great beast the more. There could have been only one end to such an unequal contest but for the courage of his girl-wife, who, realising the imminent danger of her husband, took steady aim, and settled the fate of Bruin by a fine shot from her own rifle.

Nowadays the Duchess does not practise rifle-shooting as she used to. Her hobby is dogs, fancy dogs of many sorts. But she does not, nevertheless, allow her skill as a marks-woman to grow rusty. She practises regularly throughout each year, in order to maintain her high standard, so that when she accompanies the Duke on his photographic expeditions in foreign countries, which is not seldom, she may join with him in his favourite sport.

The Duchess of Bedford is a rifle-shot who spends much time each autumn with the gun, frequently accompanying the sportsmen staying as guests at her husband's various shooting-houses, when the party goes to the moors.

The Duchess, however, prefers to be alone when out shooting, rather than with a party, and she often makes solitary rambles on the moors and on the ducal estates. She generally uses a double-barrelled rifle, made to her order, and lighter than those usually carried by sportsmen.

To Lady Tichborne, the young wife of Sir Henry Tichborne, should perhaps be awarded the palm of being the finest lady-shot in the Kingdom, that is, of ladies who go out shooting game. The Tichborne estates have, perhaps, more game on them than any other big estate in England. Sir Henry fosters his wife's inclination for shooting in every way, and she very often spends the day with him out with the gun.

One young Queen in Europe, at all events, is renowned as an excellent user of the revolver. This is Queen Hélène of Italy. She

was a Princess of Montenegro before her marriage, and every Montenegrin can shoot, it is said. So enthusiastic is Her Majesty in pursuit of her favourite pastime that, on coming to Italy as Princess of Naples, she had targets put up in the celebrated gardens at Capo di Monte Villa, and here she held shooting-matches for her friends. Until she became Queen, upon the terrible assassination of King Humbert, the Crown Princess spent much time in the small island of Monte Cristo, which her husband gave to her as a happy hunting-ground where she could indulge to the full her taste for shooting and hunting.

Latterly, however, the young Queen of Italy has practised more at fixed targets, and has not done so much at killing game. The King of Italy has the reputation of being a great shot, but he rarely succeeds in passing Queen Hélène's score.

The photo we give shows one of the readers of THE GIRL'S REALM at target practice. The rifle in use is the Martini Repeater, a light and suitable gun for ladies. It is absolutely necessary that a girl should be carefully instructed as to the correct method of holding a rifle, how to load and unload, the right way to raise the rifle to the shoulder, and the correct position in which she should stand when firing. The beginner should in no case be allowed to practise alone till she has a thorough knowledge of her subject, and has learnt to be both careful and correct in the management of the weapon.

If the young sportswoman does not pay good heed to the instruction given her from the first, this most excellent and enjoyable pastime is apt to become a cause of danger, and to be ranked amongst the unsuitable sports taken part in by women.

If, however, a keen understanding and interest is taken in the sport, it will prove not only a health-giving and engrossing amusement, but one that may be of the greatest use in training girls to be accurate, steady, and alert.

"HULLO! WHO ARE YOU?"

The Children's Own Corner.

CONDUCTED BY THE EDITOR.

MY DEAR LITTLE PEOPLE,—

I have ever so many letters from you which I was very glad to get, and which, I am sure, will interest you all very much.

Here is MUFF TIGRINA, a cat, who writes to me a letter, in which he tells me all his feelings about ribbons and dogs and music :—

MY DEAR EDITOR.—I saw Prince's letter in the Children's Corner, so I thought that if he could get a letter printed, I surely could. I think Prince is a very conceited dog. I do not think much of dogs as a rule, they are so high and mighty. He cannot say anything about my being petted and spoilt, I deserve it (I am a half Persian). Fancy allowing a great dog in the dining-room! For myself I do not care where I go, as long as there is a good chair to sleep on. If I have a weakness for any room it is the drawing room on at-home days. I always look my best then. Missus brushes me and I have a ribbon on. Of my ribbons I like the yellow one, it suits my complexion so well, though the pink is not bad.

What a fuss they make if one does stay out a little late at night! I sometimes sing at the roof concerts; they are very select affairs. Missus says I have a rather good soprano voice.

I wish I could make Missus understand that I should like to look my best when I go out calling in the afternoon, and therefore wish to have a ribbon on. But she will never let me. "They get dirty soon enough without that," she says. How delightful it is to scratch that old dog Prince's nose, especially when he is asleep!

With love from

MUFF TIGRINA.

A FAMILY TEA-PARTY.

From a photograph by Gwendolen English, one of my little Canadian readers.

The Spring has come—the beautiful Spring—with all its dear promises of greater loveliness. The wind stirs through the trees and weaves a lovely lace-pattern on the sun-lit ground. The daisies are in the grass for the children to pick, and the hawthorn smells sweet against the sky. The groves are ablaze with yellow lilies, and the wonderful blossom of the wild white cherry shines like silver. What does it signify that Spring is often a gay deceiver, and does not keep its promises. One beautiful day makes amend, and my children are writing of their gardens.

MARGARET WOODWARD writes: "The bulbs are appearing above the ground now. Several are coming up, so my garden will be quite gay in the Spring."

"MAB" writes:

"My sister and I always sprinkle some crumbs outside our dining-room window, and such a queer assortment of birds collect there. It is very amusing to watch them. I am so very fond of THE GIRL'S REALM and I always read the Children's Corner before anything. We have three cats and a kitten, a fox terrier which will do some tricks, but he is getting out of them now. I have a garden of my own this year and I have planted wallflowers, lilies of the valley and tulips in it for the winter. Do you think it will look pretty?"

And from the Argentine Republic in South America comes a letter from ETHEL WADE about another garden and another season. The time of blossom is at an end; it is the time of fruit; the time of apricots and peaches and nectarines and other fruit with strange, wild names.

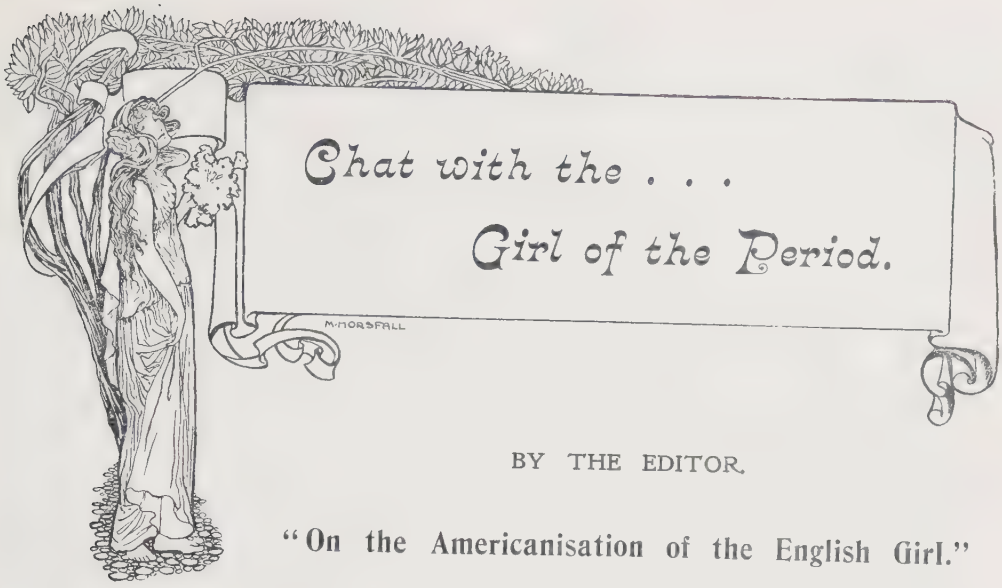
"I live in South America at a place called 'Lomas.' We live in a 'Quinta,' the Spanish word for a house with a large garden. Just now there are heaps of fruit ripe—apples, pears, peaches, grapes, pomegranates, and a fruit called 'pelones,' it is something like a peach with a smooth skin. It has a nicer taste. I and my three sisters go to the 'Barker Memorial School.'"

Then comes a letter that has nothing to do with gardens, or fruit, or flowers, but makes us think of Christmas, and of the poor people also in the gloomy days. Mrs. Thonger, Cumberland House, Woodbridge, Suffolk, appeals to little children to send her their old Christmas cards for her charity work for hospitals. "I make old cards into new ones and send away hundreds at Christmas to various institutions, over 1,000 went to Africa, and 500 to Aldershot for the soldiers' hospital."

Many more letters are before me, dear little letters that all want to be answered or printed. A letter from "Marjorie" and one from "Nina Rosa" about the hundred books that she possesses, of which "Ivanhoe" is her favourite. Letters from M. C. T. Waterford; from "Belinda," from "Helen," from "Alice" all of which I hope to answer at some future time.

Good-bye, my dear little people,

Your loving friend, THE EDITOR.



Chat with the . . . Girl of the Period.

BY THE EDITOR.

"On the Americanisation of the English Girl."

My Dear Girls,—I should like to tell you of a lecture, or a chat, that I heard Mr. R. Whiteing deliver the other day at the Society of American Women. It was on the fruitful topic of the Americanisation of the English girl. The Society, by-the-way, is formed on a very good plan. The American ladies in London meet once a month at the Prince's Restaurant (where they have rooms of their own) and talk on some topic of the day. Both the entertainment and the refreshments are just what is wanted for a gathering of this sort. They are light and at the same time sufficient. On this occasion, for instance, the Society had a little music—very good music from American players of note. Then Mr. Whiteing opened his conversation; after that came a little more music, then the party broke up for a cup of tea in an adjoining room. This, to my view, is the model of a pleasant social gathering. It is all over in an hour or two. It does not interfere with the work or with the other pleasures of the day, and it gives the members plenty to talk about that is much above the level of mere aimless gossip.

Mr. Whiteing's point was that the English girl is in process of Americanisation. She is being brought more and more under the *régime* of liberty, with its tremendous guarantees and safeguards in a highly-cultivated self-respect. He showed that it was a moral liberty, wholly distinct from the supposed right of the American girl to refuse invitations to the father to dinner parties held in his own house. There was nothing of that in it at all. Americanisation of the right sort, as distinct from vulgarisation, which was not American at all because it was simply cosmopolitan, meant that you got the best results out of all—both womankind and mankind—by simply trusting them. The American girl was taught to believe that, in the main, she was and must be her own surest safeguard. She went about freely, her chaperon, was a friend rather than a duenna. She was taught to regard herself with the respect due to a responsible being. This was not altogether new to our practice. In fact our girls have, compared with those on the Continent, also been largely brought up in that way, and with the most excellent results, but it has been carried further in the United States, and with results that are still nothing less than encouraging. In so far as Americanisation meant a mere trick of smartness we needed to learn nothing from America, and too often had nothing to learn, but in so far as it meant a grave sense of the girl's responsibility to herself and for herself, it could hardly be carried too far. Our whole modern movement for high-class education for girls was Americanisation of a kind. We had found out that the best way to prepare girls for life and work was to fortify them with robust studies, and that to teach them to think well was to teach them to act well. The American girls began that with their innumerable colleges, based on the bold claim of a share in the highest life of the mind, and the old *régime* of plain living and high thinking had done for them exactly what it has done for everybody, in fitting them both for the fireside and for the ordinary competition of life of the world. That was Americanisation in its essence. It meant no more than that and, above all, it meant no less. It was not by any manner of means a trick of pertness or slanginess, or over boldness of any kind, that was the mere degradation of a great idea. It was founded on the belief that just in proportion as women are said to be timid, retiring, and doubtful of themselves, so their minds must be strengthened by the most thorough intellectual discipline, that to feed them in their enfeebled state, real or supposed, with mere accomplishments was to rob them of their chance of growing up in true health and strength.

"We were far away," Mr. Whiteing said, "and on the whole for the better, from dear old Cranford with its

vanished ideals." I wonder how many of my girls have read that exquisite bit of literature. Those who have not will, I hope, on my recommendation get it at once; they ought to find it in almost any library worthy of the name, for it has long since taken its place among the classics of our literature. Well, in "Cranford" Mrs. Gaskell shows us a society of women brought up in the old way, and indeed most admirably brought up in many of the great essentials, but just wanting in the touch with life. They were not frivolous, far from it, but they were remote from life and its issues. So this exquisite little village, a community of retired gentlewomen, more or less "decayed," was still in one point of view but a collection of fine and noble creatures who had never had their chance. One loves them all, yet pities them at the same time. They were so limited in their outlook on life, so dependent on outside help, which alas! did not always come when it was wanted, that one could not but feel that Society owed them better opportunities of preparation for the work of life. Their tiny round of visits and small talk was not enough. It was impossible to find elbow-room in such an atom of a world. The typical picture of its limitations was in Miss Matty's preparations for retiring for the night. She had not the courage to look under the bed for the burglar who she felt sure would be there in his own good time, so she rolled a little ball under the bed, and when it safely touched the wall beyond without finding an obstacle, she felt that for this night at least she had had one more lucky escape. It was touching, it was beautiful, it was everything almost that was fascinating to the mind, as an object of mere humorous contemplation, but it was not exactly the rigour of the game of a strong spirit trying to hold its own in a wicked old world.

This was the substance of the lecture that we heard, and which I discussed with three of my girls as we walked home through the Park. It was a lovely afternoon, a touch of spring was in the air. The sun shone through the great trees and they threw their delicate shadows about; the tracery of their branches seemed like intricate lace work, that the wind was weaving. There was a song above us, as a hundred little birds were busy with their nest-making and with all the preoccupations of their wild lot. How far removed it all seemed from the strife and turmoil of human life!

"And so we are growing Americanised," said Caroline, in her abrupt fashion. "I thought it was the march of events that had caught us up—the necessity for poor womankind to put her shoulder to the wheel or she would perish by the way."

"I think it is both," said Lilian. "I do not think that the English girl could possibly have remained like the Cranford ladies. The railways, the telegrams, the postcards would have prevented it. And yet how heroic Miss Matty was. I do not think an American girl could have been more uncomplaining, could have set to work more pluckily with her tea shop to earn an honest penny. I could not, I know." She went on a little tremulously. "I do not want to earn money if I can help it. I want to be a good man's wife, and if I cannot be that I want to take care of little children, to teach them, and to nurse the sick."

"Whatever you want to be, my dear," said Caroline, uncompromisingly, "you will have to be prepared for it. The time of examinations has caught us up, and there can be no more dallying for women on the way."

"American girls are much more queens than we are," said Beatrice. "I remember an American saying that English women always seemed so apologetic—apologising for being women. Americans are more self-respecting. I do not want to be a teacher or a nurse. I want to be a journalist, and I should like to be as American girls are—holding my own with men and yet not losing my charm and feminine personality because I am doing work such as they do."

"There you are wrong," cried Caroline, indignantly. "It is all very well in America, where women have it all their own way. You can look pretty and yet earn your living as you like. But here we must put aside our frills and fancies. We must start in the race. The field is open in America, here the field is only partly open. Whoever wants to get on must contest every inch of the way. Men and women are rivals. You must not care for attentions or for favour, or the wolf will get hold of you."

"Oh, I know," said Lilian. "But is there no occupation where a woman can remain a woman? Surely there are some that she alone can perform." The wind blew her golden hair across her childlike face as she spoke, and there were tears in her blue eyes.

"Oh, my dears," I said, "what the American girls have to teach us is a more independent spirit. The English girl is as industrious, as eager to make her way, but she is timid. She does not do as the American girl does—carve out a path for herself in her own way. In big enterprises or in little ones it is all the same. If the American girl makes up her mind to be a milliner she does not do as the English girl does, wait until she can get a big shop in a big town. She simply learns her trade thoroughly, takes a barn, if she cannot afford more hospitable premises, and sets to work. If she wants to take photographs she does not set up a studio at first, she goes from house to house and takes the people in their own surroundings. She is more original and she has more respect for labour. Whatever she does she holds her own in Society. If she is working an engine, when her time of labour is over she washes her hands, puts on a pretty dress and goes out feeling not less a queen because she is earning her living. It is in this that the American girl is superior to you, my dears. There is no angry rivalry between her and men. The woman has a right to her corner of the world. She has it as every man has it, as all God's creatures should have it."

Thus we discussed the question until the sun set behind the trees, and we were still discussing it when we reached home and bade each other farewell.

I must now say good-bye to you, my dear girls,

Your affectionate friend, THE EDITOR.

THE TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD.—I.

Pity the poor little boy whose nose is out of joint.

From a drawing by F. Y. CORY.

By permission of Mr. Walter Dowdeswell

"THE CUNNING SKILL TO BREAK A HEART."

One of Miss Fortescue Brickdale's arresting pictures

"SIGH NO MORE, LADIES."

A PORTION OF A DECORATIVE DESIGN EXECUTED BY MISS BRICKDALE AT THE AGE OF 15.

"Such Stuff as Dreams are made of."

The Fanciful Art of Miss Fortescue Brickdale, the only woman ever admitted to the Society of Painters in Oils.

By EDITH YOUNG.

Illustrated by Special Photographs (by Russell & Sons) of some of Miss Fortescue Brickdale's finest pictures.

"SIGH NO MORE."
A portion of the design shown above.

ALTHOUGH Miss Fortescue Brickdale has been distinguished for some years as a young artist who possessed a more than usually fine perception of the essentials which go to the making of fine pictures, it was a collection of forty-five paintings exhibited in the galleries of Messrs. Dowdeswell, in 1901, which finally established her reputation as an artist of particular ability. Since then her work has commanded an unusual amount of interest, to which a loan exhibition in Leighton House in the present year has further contributed. So that now, in the estimation of many people, Miss Brickdale ranks as an artist of very fine qualities indeed.

In exhibiting a series of paintings, Miss Brickdale has been enabled to show what diversified powers she possesses. Of quaint and dainty imagination, she has worked until she has obtained a technique which allows her to express her ideas clearly and beautifully. It is quite evident from her work that she has studied in English Schools, and has made excellent use of the best methods to be discovered in these. She is a distinguished artist in a certain kind of decorative painting—the kind of painting by means of which Mr. Byam Shaw in particular has shown us how beautiful pictures may be made. The mind of an artist sees pictures in everything; pictures in words and in thoughts. The artist places these pictures on canvas, in gay attire, in high, unnatural

tones, or low and quiet colouring, but always according to that wonderful picture he has in his mind. If he is a very clever artist indeed, and has studied the technique of painting as well as the imaginative side of it, he can produce a picture which satisfies himself. And even if his methods are quite unusual, and his colour very extraordinary, he can convince other people of the beauty of that first idea of his which gave him the picture.

Miss Brickdale undoubtedly possesses an exceptional talent for first appreciating a pretty idea, and then for expressing it. Her work is almost entirely decorative and fanciful, the outcome of a clear and beautiful imagination, which in other fields of art would be expressed in fairy tales, in romantic plays, in programme music. Miss Brickdale elaborates pictures from elaborate subjects. Highly coloured detail crowds into quite a small drawing a wonderful amount of bright and fanciful thought. Few, indeed, of her pictures can be called anything else but small pictures, some are quite tiny presentments of subjects capable of very large treatment indeed.

By permission of Mr. Charles Dowdeswell.

"LIKE THE REMEMBRANCE OF A GUEST THAT TARRIETH BUT A DAY."

From the picture by Miss Fortescue Brickdale.

Miss Brickdale's training and experience as a black-and-white artist have perfected in her the illustrative faculty to an unusual degree. Whether the pictures which are illustrative of a certain subject are such perfect pictures as those which are fine in themselves without the help of an illustrative title, is a question which is always liable to provoke a great amount of discussion. Miss Brickdale's work is almost purely illustrative. As such it is very perfect work indeed, the work of a conscientious artist, who spares no trouble towards expressing beautifully and carefully some very quaint and original thoughts. That is why Miss Brickdale's collection of forty-five small pictures represents far more concentrated work than one would imagine before viewing the whole.

The completion of such a set of finished pictures must be looked upon as quite an exceptional achievement.

Miss Brickdale, who was born in January, 1872, at Upper Norwood, London, began the serious study of Art at the age of nineteen under Mr. Herbert A. Bone at the Crystal Palace School of Art. Before entering this school, however, she had done very pretty work on her own account. In the Leighton House collection of her pictures, two decorative designs in colour were shown which Miss Brickdale had accomplished at the age of fifteen. These were correct forerunners of her subsequent work, being prettily illustrative of "Sigh no more, ladies," interesting, too, on account of, even at that early age, their showing that an exceptional talent lay behind a somewhat conventional design.

At the Crystal Palace School Miss Brickdale distinguished herself by taking several prizes and medals, including the scholarship for 1892. In January, 1895, she was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools, the influence of which, in spite of her individual talent, is so apparent in her subsequent work. In 1898, Miss Brickdale, while in the Academy Schools, obtained a prize for design for decoration of a public building. This competition was open to students of either sex.

Up till this time Miss Brickdale had been engaged in working in black and white, principally for Messrs. Newnes, and had exhibited black-and-white drawings in the Royal Academy Exhibitions.

Every year since 1898, when the successful design was exhibited, Miss Brickdale has had pictures in the Royal Academy. Her first oil-colour to be exhibited, entitled "The pale complexion of true love, and the red glow of scorn and proud disdain," was hung there in 1899, together with a smaller one entitled, "That which overcometh the world."

In 1900 a small panel oil-colour, "Time, the Physician," and in 1901, "The Deceitfulness of Riches," have been Miss Brickdale's further contributions to the Academy, besides several very excellent black-and-white drawings.

By permission of Mr. Charles Dowdeswell.

"YOUTH AND THE LADY."

A characteristic example of Miss Brickdale's work. Into this small drawing is crowded an amount of bright and fanciful thought

Up till this time the full extent of Miss Brickdale's powers as an artist could only be guessed at by those who happened to see her work in the Royal Academy. Then occurred the famous exhibition of forty-five water colours at Messrs. Dowdeswell's, shown under the general title of "Such Stuff as Dreams are made of." Some of these, reproduced herewith, may give some idea of Miss Brickdale's pretty imagination and of her clever draughtsmanship. Of her colouring, which at times is brilliant to the point of hardness, at others skilfully tempered to low and beautiful tones, it is, of course, impossible to convey any idea whatever. It is in her colouring that Miss Brickdale shows most forcibly the influence of her Academy training. Her clever picture of "The Duenna," shown in this collection, has been reproduced many times, and is consequently most familiar to those who have not seen the originals. One of the most beautiful in conception is that of a man and a woman in poor clothing embracing a child—the picture entitled "Riches." Throughout the series, dainty ladies in old-world attire pace quaint old-fashioned gardens, young girls amid flowers, grim pictures with grim meaning, or bright pictures with the brightest, these were all of "The Stuff that Dreams are made of."

AN ILLUSTRATION TO THE BALLAD OF "THE TWA SISTERS."
An example of Miss Brickdale's versatility and of her fine use of the pen.

Many of the pictures were lent for the recent exhibition of Miss Brickdale's work in Leighton House. Two oil colours in this collection were exhibited at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. In the spring of this year, besides her exhibition at Leighton House, Miss Brickdale showed "The Ugly Princess," a large oil colour, at the Society of Painters in Oils, Piccadilly. She had the honour, then, of being elected a member of the above Society, the first lady ever admitted within the ranks of painters in oils. She has since also been elected as an Associate of the Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours, and is represented in their Spring Exhibition by two pictures.

Altogether Miss Brickdale has already made a wonderful record of progress and work. Her pictures bear the impress of a very diligent and clever mind. Of hard work done carefully and happily, of a very pretty conception of the poetical and imaginative in art. Miss Brickdale in her "Dreams" leads everyone else to dream; to dream of her fair ladies, with "Cunning Skill to break a heart," of flowers and brightness in "The Only Pretty Ring-time," of "Love and Adversity," and things which cannot be pictured in words.

It is a very pretty power and a clever fancy which leads us to dream, as one may dream, over Miss Brickdale's pictures. It is the power

of an artist who has studied and worked hard, and has kept alive the fair creations of her own most dainty fancy to her own most original endings.

As an illustrator in black and white, Miss Brickdale takes her place easily as one of the leading artists of the day. Her two illustrations to the ballad of "The Twa Sisters," reproduced herewith, give some idea of her broad and beautiful treatment of form and line, of a poetic temperament, of a nature sensitive to many beautiful and artistic influences.

It is this sensitiveness to things outside the ordinary technique of painting, which causes Miss Brickdale's work to be remarkable. While she never neglects the traditions and limitations of her training, she allows a very pretty imagination full liberty in the poetic treatment of her subjects. In this way a very conservative technique becomes a willing slave to bright and beautiful ideas; each picture becomes stamped with the individuality of an artist of more than ordinary ability, and the result is the very extraordinary success which has attended two exhibitions of works by Miss Fortescue Brickdale.

AN ILLUSTRATION BY MISS BRICKDALE TO "THE TWA SISTERS."

A companion to the pen-and-ink drawing on the opposite page.

A PORTION OF THE DECORATIVE DESIGN "SIGH NO MORE, LADIES."

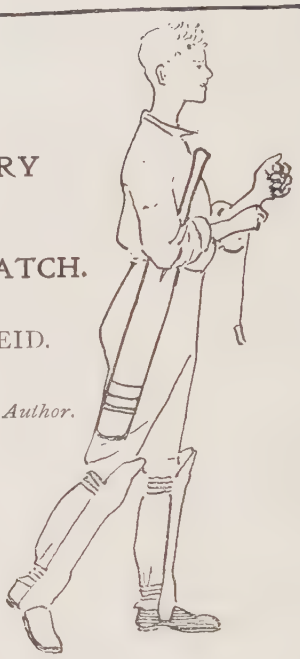
Executed by Miss Brickdale when only fifteen years of age.

"AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR."

THE STORY OF A CRICKET MATCH.

By SYBIL REID.

Illustrated by the Author.



MARY and I are going to be married. That is all I seem to know or care about; and now it is all happily settled, I can afford to laugh.

I loved her from the first moment I saw her.

There came three weeks in London; and then my regiment was ordered to South Africa.

I was awfully keen to go, but it clashed in a most plaguey way with Mary.

I was on leave, and had to hurry back up to the North to Millchester and order kit, and say good-bye to my people; and all the time I was wondering if I should write—if I should say anything to Mary—I was almost too much of a coward to put my fate to the test.

In this unsatisfactory state of affairs, I unexpectedly got a whole twenty-four hours leave to bid my people good-bye.

I remembered afterwards I had already bidden them good-bye once. I didn't want to harrow the mater again, and the governor was in Ireland.

I was thinking about Mary, and wondering if she were at Tilworth. There wasn't time to write and find out, and I hadn't the impudence to wire, so Diggs packed my bag, and I went to Tilworth first thing next morning by a wretched cross-country line. Through some mistake I missed the connection, and it was well on in the afternoon before I arrived. By good luck I might see Mary, dine with the family, and catch a train which would take me to Millchester in the small hours of the morning.

I left my bag at the hotel and walked on to call, casual-like, at the Manor.

In the main street I met old Entwistle, in flannels, coming along.

"Hullo, Joscelyn!" said he. "Then we're saved. Come at once."

"What—is somebody dying?" said I.

"Come quick, man! Henry's boots will fit you, and we can manage the clothes somehow!"

"Entwistle," said I to myself, "Entwistle is mad. He must be humoured; but, confound

him! he can't be humoured for long—there's *Mary*. What is it?" I asked impatiently of Entwistle.

"The tightest possible place. The Groveshire match—the whole thing in confusion. *Double*, there's a good chap!"

I began to see light, and doubled submissively by his side.

In broken, disjointed sentences he poured forth his tale.

The Groveshire match—Albury one man short—fielded a substitute—telegrams for eleventh man—no eleventh man to be had. Groveshire 146. Albury gone in—seven for eighty—frantic searches by Entwistle—Albury at that moment *in extremis*. Thank goodness he could trust me! Where had I sprung from? Most providential indeed! We were there at last!

Hereupon ensued the sight of Entwistle and me in extended order, making for the pavilion just as Groveshire cheers announced the fall of Albury's eighth wicket.

We were past speech. I found myself tossed from hand to hand like a sack of mails, and just as I had got on one boot the ninth wicket fell.

Oh, disaster! With what hurtling speed was the other foot shod! A bat from somewhere—gloves from somewhere. "Play! Play!" came from without. The umpires consulted. "Eleventh man! eleventh man!"

The next moment—the nearest thing I have ever known—I was shooting out into the field, the tell-tale sun proclaiming the fact that I had on one brown boot and one white.

I have gone in to bat—in all humility, be it spoken—amid frantically applauding Tommies. I have gone in amid the chill silence of the stranger who neither knows nor cares, but never before have I gone in amid derisive bursts of laughter as I did that day.

It was the boots!

I did not care. My one desire was to fulfil my obligation to Entwistle and get away as soon as possible to learn my fate from Mary.

I wondered, with a sudden creeping sensation in my spine, if *she* were on the ground—if she—detestable thought!

One wicket to fall, and twenty-seven runs to make to win.

My partner at the opposite wicket was a small boy of fifteen or so.

I looked closer, and saw it was Mary's little brother. I went down to him and shook hands.

"Well, Freddy," I said.

"Well," said he, grinning; "I've got six; and look here, I say, that left-hand chap's got a nasty fast one every over or so. And, I say, you ran it rather fine, Mr. Joscelyn, didn't you?"

"Fine?" I said with a groan, "I never meant to run it at all. And—and I say, how's your sister?"

"Polly? Oh, I don't know! Polly's in London with Uncle Pakenham for the Lumley House Ball—and——"

"Play up, sir! play up!" cried the fielding captain, and I went sadly back to my wicket.

Mary in London—and I here!

I played the first over—a maiden—and then Entwistle, in misguided kindness, came out with a whole handful of boots, and insisted, amid ironic cheers from the rustic spectators, on finding the pair to my white right foot.

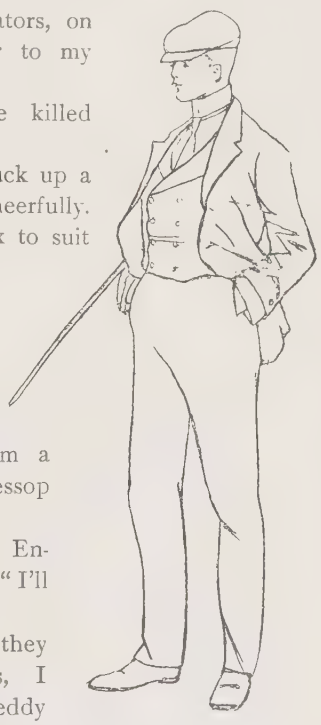
I could have killed Entwistle.

"You must buck up a bit," he said, cheerfully. "We draw at six to suit some fellows' trains. It's past five now — lots of time, lots of time! But you ain't Shrews—I mean—Jessop 'em a little, my boy, Jessop 'em a little!"

"Very well, Entwistle," I said, "I'll Jessop 'em."

Once, when they changed bowlers, I ran across to Freddy and said:

"When's the next train to town?"



"I walked on to call, casual like, at the manor."—(*p.* 620.)

"Six-fifteen," said he; "it's the last one up. Why? I say—aren't we having a jolly time?"

"Jolly," said I, and went back to my wicket.

"*It's the last one.*" Oh, Mary, Mary!

We got the runs with a comfortable five minutes to spare, and in the fervour of the minute I thumped Freddy on the back and paid him wild, extravagant compliments.

Then, like Douglas Gordon, I "flung away" my bat and gloves, and ran panting for the station.

My meteor-like appearance in the nick of time—my theatrical victory—my bat-like flight in someone else's clothes would look suspicious, but I had no time to spare to explain matters.

Perhaps Freddy would do so for me. I hoped he would, though, possibly, Freddy's explanation would be worse than none.

II.

I CAUGHT the last train to town by half a second, and fell panting and ticketless into a first-class carriage, the sole occupant of which was a respectable bishop.

He looked over the top of his paper for three solemn minutes, taking in every detail of me from my ill-fitting flannels to my furtive, thief-like gaze.

"From the Tilworth Tennis Tournament, sir?" he asked.

"No, my lord, from the Groveshire match, and a close finish, too," I said, grimly.

"Ah," said the bishop.

Then, after a pregnant pause, he inquired: "Which won?"

"I don't know," I answered foolishly.

The bishop said nothing, but he seemed to be thinking a great deal.

I thought of Mary, and matured my plans. I, too, had been invited to the Lumley House Ball. Our town house was shut up, but the caretaker would allow me to take a suit of my own dress clothes if approached in a proper spirit. I felt in my pocket.

My search produced two shillings, a sixpence, a stamp that had evidently been stuck on and torn off again (an unmanly and penurious trick), and a collar stud.

It was not until then I remembered I was wearing someone else's clothes!

I counted the contents again, and as I realised that I should be called upon at Vauxhall to pay for my journey, and that the cost of it would be several times two-and-sevenpence, I felt great beads of perspiration course down my cheeks. I suppose the bishop saw my dilemma, for he suddenly laid down his paper, cleared his throat, and ventured nervously:

"HEREUPON ENSUED THE SIGHT OF ENTWISTLE AND ME, IN EXTENDED ORDER, MAKING FOR THE PAVILION."—(*p.* 621.)

"You must pardon my asking, but are you in any financial straits?"

"I am," I answered, frankly. That"—I held out the coins—"that is all I have."

The stud rolled from between my fingers along the seat towards the bishop. He picked it up gravely, and restored it to me.

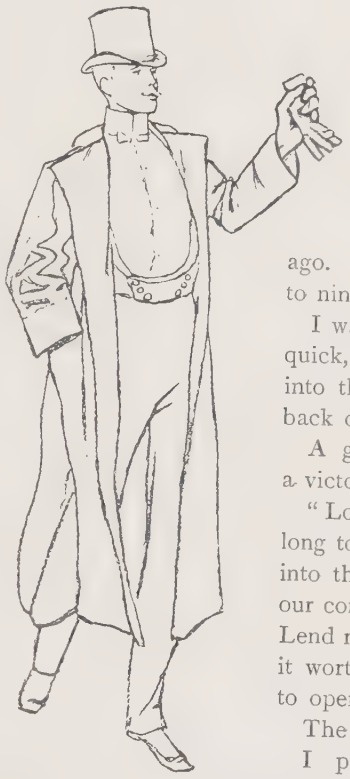
"You must have come away in a great hurry," he said.

"I did. I am under orders for the front. My regiment sails on Thursday. I have urgent affairs in town. I have nothing but this to pay for my ticket. I don't know what to do. I must bluff it out with the collector, I suppose. I am Joscelyn, of the 133rd Fusiliers, but shall I be able to make anyone believe it?"

"My dear sir," said the bishop, in distress, "tell me how I can help you."

He put his hand into his pocket and brought out a great deal of money. "Tell me how I can be of use to you."

Well, I thanked him somehow, blushing crimson the while, and asked him to write down his name and address for me.



"I HAILED A HANSOM."
—(p. 624.)

We talked for the rest of the journey, and at Vauxhall, as the train steamed away to Waterloo, my friend in need leant out of the carriage window to express the kind hope that my troubles might be at an end.

I paid the price of the ticket with the money he lent me, and drove in a four-wheeler to Great Cumberland Place. It was half-past eight, and broad daylight. In half-an-hour I should be in decent clothes again, get a good dinner at the club, and later on saunter up the stairs of Lumley House to Mary!

In the amplitude of my relief I paid the cabman liberally.

I gave him the two-and-six, which left me with the stamp and the stud. He drove away, and I rang at the paternal door.

There was no answer to my ring. I rang again. When I had rung three times I began to get cross. I rang a fourth time, then I realised the true situation. The caretaker must be out!

I tried the area-gate. It was locked. Somebody laughed in the street behind me. A small crowd had collected to stare at what was an unusual sight for Great Cumberland Place, and I felt myself going in to bat at Tilworth a hundred years ago. A clock struck a quarter to nine.

I walked down the street with quick, nervous steps, and turned into the mews on to which the back of our house looked.

A groom was washing down a victoria.

"Look here," I said; "I belong to No. 300. I want to get into the house and change, but our confounded caretaker is out. Lend me a ladder, and I'll make it worth your while to help me to open one of the windows."

The man hesitated.

I put my hands into my pockets and produced the stuck stamp. The groom, impressed by the stamp, took off his big boots and went into the coach-house.

As he did so the clock struck nine.

When the man had got the ladder fixed, it proved too short. He went away and borrowed one from a friend. The two ladders were tied together, and my first friend went up and prised open my mother's bedroom window.

It struck 9.30 as I climbed in. I knew where to find money, and I paid the groom and his companion liberally, and then, with a sigh of relief, washed and changed.

I was just settling my tie when the recalcitrant caretaker came in with a policeman.

It was 10.15 when that little difficulty was put right, and then I turned on the trembling caretaker, and demanded food. Indeed,

I wanted food almost more then than I wanted Mary.

III.

It was 11.30 when I finished the last morsel the subdued caretaker placed before me. Never mind — just good time to get to Lumley House in Belgrave Square.

"Bring me a 'Bradshaw,' please," I said, as I hunted for a pair of white gloves.

The caretaker brought it, and as I gave orders to have a room got ready, I turned over the leaves and found the train for Millchester.

"There ought to be a 7.20 train," I said to myself; "just give me time for a little bit of sleep and——"

The 7.20 train had been taken off, and there was nothing between 1.20 a.m. and 8.52. My leave was up at 11.30.

I found a great coat in the hall, and a hat of my brother Basil's. I hailed a hansom, and was at Lumley House by 12.

Mary was not there!

Young Arkwright was on the stairs. It was no time for ceremony.

"Is Miss Bosanquet here?" I asked.

"No," said he, grinning. "She's at the Hulses'. I've been there, and found *I'd* drawn blank, and—ta-ta!"

He was gone, and in a minute I saw him dancing with the second Vereker girl with the red hair.

Mary at the Hulses'—and I here.

And I had not a card for the Hulses'.

Perhaps she was coming on to Lumley House. Well, I could stay till five minutes to one, and then most imperatively I must start for Euston to catch the 1.20 to Millchester, just as I was, in my dress-clothes and my brother Basil's hat.

How the next three-quarters of an hour passed I do not know. I hung about the stairs till my hostess looked fixedly at me, and then I went into the hall and was outstared by a person in red breeches. After that I drifted into the ball-room.

Miss Bosanquet arrived at ten minutes to one.

I took a minute to cross the room, and then I met her eyes, and after that it did not seem so difficult to speak.

"What a long time you have been at the Hulses'," I said; "I must catch the 1.20. My leave is up at half-past eleven to-morrow morning, and we sail for Africa on Thursday. Ask Freddy. And, oh, Mary, will you marry me?"

"Yes," said Mary.

I caught the 1.20.

"'OH, MARY, WILL YOU MARRY ME?'"

I am back from South Africa now, and am going to marry Mary to-morrow.

Oddly enough the bishop is a great friend of Mary's, and is going to marry us.

We are going to be married in town; we go to the Manor House for the honeymoon.

WHO BRAVELY FACED DISASTER AND DEATH.

By C. W. M. FEIST.

"A noble type of good
Heroic Womanhood."

So sang Longfellow in his fine tribute to Florence Nightingale. It is not, however, my intention to speak within the limits of this short article either of her, of Grace Darling, Catherine Graeme, the brave women of Derry, of "Sister Dora," the daughter of the Rev. Mark Pattison, of Hauxwell, whose story has already been told in these pages, or even of Alice Ayres, the humble heroine of the fatal fire in Union Street, Borough. Their names, one and all, are written ineffaceably on the roll of fame, and, with many others, are familiar to every reader of The Girl's Realm.

But there are examples, less well known, though equally deserving of notice. Girls and women whose deeds of finest self-sacrifice and courage have passed almost into oblivion, but who deserve, nevertheless, to rank with any of those I have just named. Alice Ayres had her prototype some years ago in Mary Flood, a young domestic servant who, when a fire broke out on her master's premises (also, curiously enough, situated in a Union Street), sacrificed her own life to save that of her charges. Where is the girl, too, who could forget the thrill of pride with which she read of the conduct of the passengers and crew of the ill-fated *Stella*? In the midst of a display of courage, fortitude and discipline which has rarely been surpassed there stood out conspicuously the example of one—a woman. Absolutely forgetful of self, Mrs. Rogers, the brave young stewardess, calmly remained fastening life-belts round "her ladies," as she called them. Seeing that the last of these had no belt, she detached her own, flung it round her charge and assisted her into a boat. "Jump in, Mrs. Rogers," called the sailors, but she replied, "No; if I get in the boat will sink. Good-bye; good-bye. Lord, have me!" And so she went down, as was said at the time, "one of the most sublime figures of our island story." "It was," wrote a survivor, "a display of heroism and self-abnegation which has rarely been surpassed."

Next to the devoted stewardess in bravery is Miss Greta Williams, the heroine of the terrible night which followed the disaster on the Casquets. As she sat in the overcrowded lifeboat she cheered the occupants by singing "O Rest in the Lord," and throughout showed a fortitude of spirit which in no small degree braced up and nerved the spirits of her companions.

At 6 o'clock on the morning of the 30th January, 1895, the North German Lloyd steamer, *Elbe*, was sunk off Lowestoft in a collision with the *Craithie*, and of her crew of 348 souls only 20 were saved. Of these, one was Miss Anna Maria Frederiké Böcker. Miss Böcker had for some time resided in Portsmouth with Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Cosens-Pryor, of Curzon House, with whom, by the way, she is still living. Having only a short distance, comparatively, to travel, Miss Böcker lay down in her berth fully dressed, and to this circumstance, possibly,

GRETA WILLIAMS.

The heroic singer, who, when the "Stella" was sinking, sang "Oh, Rest in the Lord" to the passengers in the life-boat.

owes her escape. There was a sudden crash and then jar. The boat stood still. Rushing up on deck Miss Böcker found the ship sinking. A life-boat near her was got ready and she was placed in it by the sailors. But a second later the boat capsized and Miss Böcker was thrown into the water. However, she managed to cling to a line of the capsized boat and was ultimately, and with great difficulty, dragged into the second boat. For a long time the position of the little company of survivors was precarious in the extreme. Heavy waves washed over the gunwale and the men had to bale continuously to keep the boat afloat. For five hours Miss Böcker lay in the water at the bottom of the boat, washed by heavy seas. During all that time no complaint escaped her lips; repeatedly she urged the other survivors to "look after themselves and not to mind her." At about 11 o'clock the smack, *Wildflower*, whose attention had been attracted, bore down and rescued Miss Böcker and her companions under circumstances of great difficulty and danger. On her return to Portsmouth Miss Böcker was honoured by an invitation from the late Empress Frederick to visit Osborne. Accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Cosens-Pryor, she arrived at East Cowes in the *Alberta*, and was presented to the late Queen and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. Miss Böcker was invited to sign Her Majesty's birthday book and on leaving received a very gracious letter from the Empress Frederick and a suitable present.

Rocky, rugged Cornwall has given us many heroines and not the least among them the Misses Prideaux-Brune, of Padstow. One day in August, a few years ago, three men and a boy went for a sail, in Padstow Harbour, in a 13-foot punt. There was a choppy sea and a strong ebb running, and owing to ignorance and improper management the boat capsized. The Misses Prideaux-Brune, who, at the time, were in their own pleasure skiff towed by a fishing smack, witnessed the accident. They at once shouted to be cast off, and "rowed like tigers to the rescue." Two of the men were drowned before succour could arrive. The fishing smack rescued the boy, and the Misses Prideaux-Brune, showing the greatest skill and determination, finally succeeded in dragging the sailor, Edward Smith, into their frail craft.

KATE VERITY,

Who battled against a swollen river at Linton Falls Skipton, to rescue a drowning lad.

ANNA BOECKER.
Who conducted herself with such bravery on the sinking "Elbe."
JULIA DIGNAM.
Of Balgriffin, Ireland, who was awarded the medal of St John of Jerusalem for trying to save a lad from death in a lime kiln.
JULIA HATCHER.
Of Moorside, who saved a lad from being gored to death by a bull.

which as it lay to was swept again and again by big waves.

That it is not the physically strong who are alone capable of acts of bravery was proved one day in May, 1890, by the act of a Mrs. Dorothy Pumphrey, who was known to her neighbours as a particularly nervous, delicate and shy little woman. One afternoon the child of a friend was playing near a well in her mother's garden, when she accidentally fell in. Mrs. Pumphrey was one of two women, who, alarmed by the child's piercing scream, ran to the spot. Without a moment's hesitation she stepped into the small, crazy bucket and asked to be lowered into the hole. Thirty or forty feet down she reached the surface of the water, leant out of the bucket and grasped the child.

Before she could drag the little one in, however, the bucket overturned, leaving her hanging from the chain—but still clutching the rescued child. There was a moment of awful suspense alike for the plucky woman and for the agonised watchers above. Presently a boy of fifteen was lowered by a rope and Mrs. Pumphrey relieved of her helpless burden. Then Mrs. Pumphrey placed a foot in the bucket and signalled to be drawn up. But the strain, and perhaps the foul air had been too much for her, and half-way to the surface she fainted. The bucket swayed to the side, Mrs. Pumphrey's right foot caught in the chain and she fell in the water head first. Revived by the sudden shock she was just able once more to clamber into the bucket, and in a terribly exhausted state was this time drawn safely to the top.

A lonely spot in Dorset was the scene of a deed of remarkable bravery combined with quick wit and intelligence. The heroine was a Miss Julia Hatcher, residing at Hayes Cottage, Moorside, one of two lonely cottages in a field lying off the main road to Blandford. The attacker was an infuriated bull.

Miss Hatcher was busily engaged in glove-making when she heard terrible screams

"SHOOT ME DEAD! THEN YOU CAN TAKE THE KEYS: NOT OTHERWISE."

How Miss Walton, the heroic young Postmistress of Van Wyk's Vlei, defied a party of Boers. They, admiring her splendid pluck, left her in possession.

Rushing to the door, she was horrified to find a huge bull tossing a lad who had been milking. Miss Hatcher lost neither her nerve nor her presence of mind. Recollecting that bulls close their eyes when stoned, she stooped hurriedly, picked up an apronful, and began a vigorous "bombardment" of the animal. The heroic girl pressed forward to the attack; the animal, his attention diverted from its victim, charged several times, but was driven off by a well-sustained fire, and ultimately retreated, followed by an extra volley to complete the rout. Then Miss Hatcher picked up the boy, who was seriously injured, and conveyed him unaided to her mother's cottage.

Miss Kate Verity was one day reading in her room near the river wharf at Linton Falls, Skipton, Yorkshire, when a child's screams attracted her attention. Running over to the wharf, she found that a little fellow named Harker had fallen into the river—swollen by heavy rains to double its usual size—and was being swept with appalling speed towards the Falls. Like a flash, Miss Verity was out and across the bridge above the Falls. Arriving level with the child about forty feet from the Falls, she dashed headlong into the river, caught little Harker, threw his head over her shoulder, and then, inch by inch, fought her way to the bank and to safety.

A young Irish girl, Miss Julia Dignam, of St. Doolagh's, Balgriffin, Dublin, wears proudly a silver medal, presented to her at Marlborough House by King Edward as Prior of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem in England. The deed for which she won this coveted honour was one of peculiar bravery, because she thoroughly realised the awful risk she ran. A lad named Sharkey was overcome one afternoon by fumes issuing from a lime kiln. An alarm was raised, and Miss Dignam, who is the daughter of a labourer, and was close by, without the slightest hesitation jumped down into the kiln. She found the lad unconscious at the bottom, and, absolutely unaided, carried him up and out of the kiln. Unhappily, however, the boy was dead.

Very impressive is the tribute

Photo by G. W. Wilson & Co.

A PORTION OF THE MEMORIAL RAISED TO THE MEMORY OF CATHERINE WATSON, A YOUNG GLASGOW GIRL OF 19, WHO SAVED A DROWNING BOY, BUT PERISHED HERSELF.

"THE CHILD WAS SAVED, THE BRAVE GIRL WAS TAKEN."

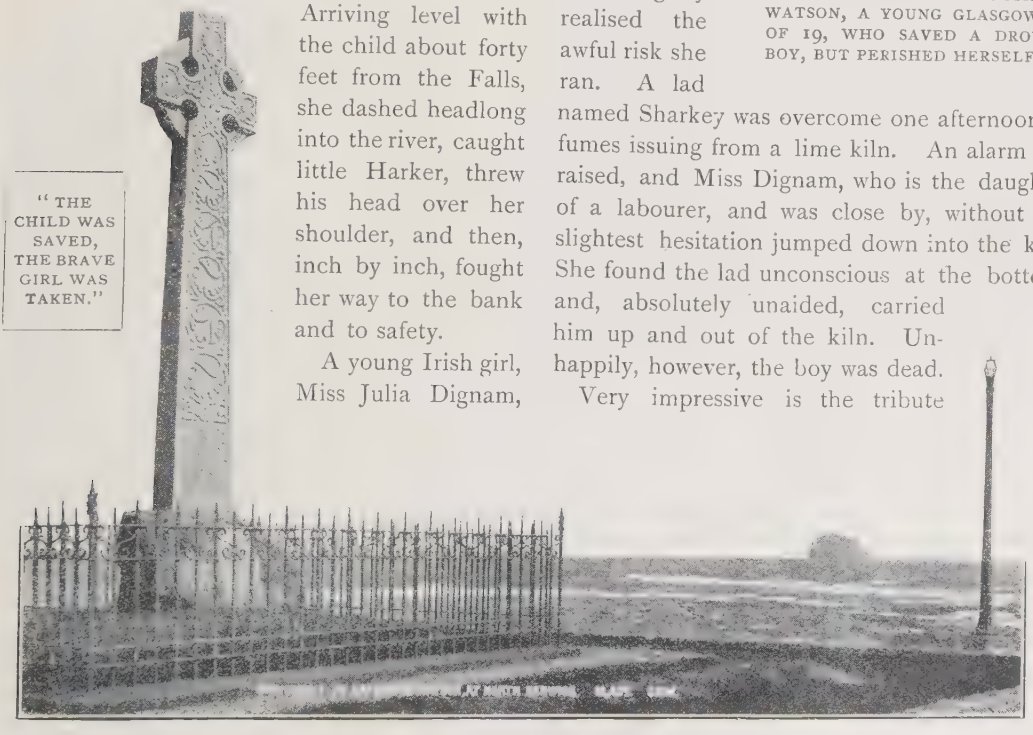


Photo by G. W. Wilson & Co.

THE MEMORIAL TO CATHERINE WATSON, RAISED AT NORTH BERWICK BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION.

which has been erected at the entrance to the harbour at North Berwick, in Scotland, in commemoration of a noble and heroic sacrifice on the part of a girl of nineteen. Catherine Watson, of Glasgow, was staying with her family at North Berwick, in a house on the East Bay, in the summer of 1889. One day she saw, from her bedroom window, that a young boy had been carried out of his depth and was struggling vainly against the undercurrent. Without any delay or fear she rushed out half-dressed, plunged into the sea and swam to the boy's rescue. She soon reached him. Then began a splendid struggle between the brave, strong girl and a stronger and relentless sea. It ended in her supporting the boy long enough for him to be saved when other help at last reached him. By this time Miss Watson's strength had given out; the currents had swept her beyond hope of rescue. A monument erected to Miss Watson's memory bears a medallion portrait, subscribed to and executed by her friends in the Glasgow School of Art. From the site of the monument one looks over the sea to the Bass Rock, and views the place where Miss Watson so nobly gave her life for another.

THE MISSES PRIDEAUX-BRUNE, OF PADSTOW.
Who rowed to the rescue of a boy and sailor drowning off the coast of Cornwall.

A thrilling and terrible tale came not long ago from "Mountain Home," the capital of Baxter County, Arkansas. The five young children of Mrs. Mary Carter were happily playing on the clearing in front of their little cabin when a huge brown bear emerged from a thicket near and struck down the eldest with his paw. Alarmed by the cries Mrs. Carter ran out, to find the monster in the act of devouring one of her little ones; she rushed to their succour, and actually succeeded in frightening the brute off, but not before the youngest had been seized and torn to pieces, the animal carrying away with him a portion of the body, while the poor boy first attacked died shortly after.

In the present war in South Africa English girls and women have over and over again shown splendid courage under circumstance, of the utmost danger and distress. The case of the brave nuns, who could scarcely be persuaded by poor Colonel Dick-Cunyngham to retire to their cellars out of reach of the Boer shells, will readily occur to your minds.

Can we imagine either anything finer than the bravery and devotion to duty displayed by Miss Walton, the young postmistress of Van Wyk's Vlei. One day, suddenly and without any warning, her little office was invaded by a party of the rebels of Cape Colony, who demanded her keys. She refused to give them up. They threatened; she was firm, "Shoot me dead," she exclaimed, "then you can take the keys; not otherwise." And the Boers, admiring her splendid pluck, left her in possession.

Nor have the Boer women and girls been behindhand in their courage and devotion during the war which has brought them so much suffering.

The Editor feels himself fortunate to have secured these dainty "Cranford" sketches from the pen of Mr. Reginald Birch. They should prove an inspiration to the many correspondents who have written to ask his advice as to the costumes and furniture needed to stage a "Cranford" play.

Martha: "Oh, ma'am, I didn't understand! Thomas has told me—— Oh! Miss Mattie——!"

Martha at the door announces Signor Brunoni.

TWO SUGGESTIVE TABLEAUX FOR A "CRANFORD" PLAY.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

SYNOPSIS.

PHILIPPA, MADGE, THEO AND HOPE, are the four daughters of Edgar Charrington, a man of exceptional genius—artist, musician, and author. The career of Edgar Charrington, in spite of its bright promise, proved, however, nothing but a succession of failures, and he dies, leaving to his four girls and two sons, Stephen and Barnard, the slender legacy of but £2,000 with which to equip themselves for the battle of life. The girls have inherited their father's genius: Hope is an accomplished musician; Madge a clever artist; Theo a budding author. Philippa, the eldest girl, is the housekeeper. It is the dream of all to go to London, to take a flat there, and expend their capital in a training that would fit each for her life's work. Before deciding to take this step, Stephen asks Mrs. Loftus, his father's sister, and Mr. Loftus, to come down and consult with them on their future. They come, but only to discountenance the scheme, and to advise that the girls, instead of breaking in on their capital, should eke out their income by taking paying guests and giving lessons. Stephen and Philippa, determine, however, to disregard the advice of their relatives, and to risk the venture. They secure a small flat in Tottenham Court Road, and Philippa and Madge go to London in advance to furnish it and make it ready. Seated in that unlovely, bare flat the first night, Philippa is seized with a sudden spasm of fear. Suppose it is all a mistake! Suppose they should fail—!

CHAPTER V.

A WEEK after the girls had taken possession of the flat Stephen joined them and spent his evenings carpentering, hanging up pictures, and laying carpets, as a pleasant relaxation after a day's work in the City. He had been unpleasantly surprised to discover that though the firm for which he worked was of long standing and first-class position, its offices were by no means so large or so comfortable as those which he had left behind in the little country town. The room in which he worked was so dark that the gas seemed to be burning all day long; the windows looked out on a narrow side street; there was a continued roar of traffic, a rumbling from the trains underground. His head ached, and he found it impossible to concentrate his thoughts. But when the long day came to an end, there was a certain exhilaration in walking home through the crowded streets, in looking at historic scenes, and feeling that one was an inmate of the greatest city—the capital of the world. Every evening, too, the flat looked more homelike, as suitable resting places were discovered for the old furniture, and the familiar pictures smiled a welcome from the walls. Madge's paper-hanging had been a success of which she was justly proud, and the little dining-room looked both pretty and cosy when the curtains were drawn and the lamps lighted. The girls were tired, but cheerful, and had always amusing little anecdotes to relate as gleanings from the day's work. The workmen, the charwoman, the porter at the door downstairs, were all so different from the country folk to whom they had been accustomed, and imitation of the Cockney accent proved an unfailing source of delight. Madge cultivated special sentences

with a view to impressing her sisters on their arrival, and when they drove up to the door insisted upon "pying the keb" with a vehemence which left them speechless with consternation.

Hope and Theo were conveyed upstairs, flight after flight, for the lift had not yet been introduced into these unfashionable mansions, and when at last they could go no further, lo! there was an open door, a blaze of light sending forth a welcome, and the new home all ready to receive them, even to the very tea on the table, and hot water in the basins in the bedrooms. It was delightful to meet again, to have the first meal in the new home, to feel that the step so long contemplated was an accomplished fact, and if a certain amount of disillusion had to be endured, the newcomers had enough good feeling to notice only what they could admire. Dark though it was, it was scarcely seven o'clock when the evening meal was finished, and in the state of pent-up excitement in which the travellers found themselves, it seemed impossible to stay quietly indoors.

"Couldn't we *do* something?" asked Hope, wistfully. "I feel like a caged lion shut up here, knowing that London lies outside! We need not go to bed for three hours at least. Oh Steve! the top of an omnibus—a drive along the streets, with all the lights . . . past St. Paul's and the Abbey, and along the Embankment. Could we do it? Oh, do you think we might do it!

The eager voice, and pleading eyes raised a general laugh of amusement, and even the prudent Stephen could find no objection to so innocent a request.

"Well, really, I think we might rise to that! Put on warm coats and we will lock the door behind us and sally forth. An omnibus to St Paul's, and another to Victoria Station, and back the best way we can. I don't know the ropes yet, but we shall easily find out. It will do Phil and Madge good, too, for they have hardly stirred out of the flat this last fortnight!"

No sooner said than done. It was astonishing how quickly hats and jackets were donned, and in a quarter of an hour's time the four girls were fearfully clambering up the narrow steps leading to the top of a "City" 'bus, and taking their seats on the foremost benches. Hope took an outside place, but begged to change seats before she had driven a hundred yards; at every turn and crossing her heart died within her, and she seemed to look death in the face. She hung on to Philippa's arm and groaned incessantly, but when asked if she would like to return home, "Oh no, no! I love it!" she cried, and groaned again, more fearfully than before.

The other occupants of the benches stared with curious gaze at the five young people, whose animation was in such marked contrast to their own phlegmatic calm, and Theo studied them in her turn, making up little romances concerning them as her nature was . . . "That fat dark man is married to the little woman in blue! She was left an orphan, and he was a friend of her father's. He offered to marry her, and she was lonely and sad, and didn't care very much what she did. He is very kind to her . . . he is carrying all the parcels . . . but her heart isn't satisfied. She stares before her all the time, and never speaks. . . . The girl with the pearl beads serves in a shop . . . She is going home to a suburb, and her 'young man' will meet her at the station. They are going to have a little shop together, and she is thinking how she will manage it. How she does turn and twist! Her hair is like a great turban round her head. She would be pretty if she would not spoil herself. That poor sad-looking young fellow has just had notice to leave his situation. He is thinking how he can tell his wife . . . he will put his arms round her, and they will cry together. She will kiss him and say—'For better for worse, dear! for richer for poorer!' Her voice will be like music . . . he will look at her, and his face will shine. . . Oh, dear! I am crying myself. How stupid! I'll write an article—'On a City 'Bus,' a character sketch, short and strong, and dramatic. . . . Where shall I send it?"

She went off into a reverie, turning over in her mind the names of different papers and magazines, planning, wondering, weaving dreams, while the omnibus made its way down Holborn towards the Viaduct. Madge and Steve were chattering gaily together. Hope sat with clasped hands, gazing eagerly ahead for the first glimpse of the majestic dome. Tired Philippa blinked at the rows of lamps, the flaring advertisements, and gaily-lighted saloons, and wished that the drive would last for hours so that she might sit still, and feel the refreshing night air play upon her brow. She groaned when the stoppage came and Madge pulled her impatiently by the arm; she had nothing but yawns to mingle with her sisters' ecstasies as they stood at the corner of the Churchyard, and gazed and gazed until it seemed that they would never tear themselves away. Hope was hearing in imagination the swell of the great organ, the reed-like sweetness of the voices of the white-robed choristers. Madge was already painting a picture

of the great edifice by night, the twinkling lights beneath, the vast outline losing itself mysteriously in the clouds. Theo was trembling and biting her lips to keep back the tears. To her it was not a building at all—it was a sign—a symbol! The wide steps were not empty; she saw on them the blaze of great national pageants; the wide nave was filled with happy faces; with black-robed women who wept and wrung their hands; in her ears was the tramp of armed men. She shivered and drew her cloak closely round her. When the next omnibus for Victoria came along she took a surreptitious opportunity to flick the drops from her eyelashes. Some day she would write about this too! Oh what wealth of subjects, what capital, what inspiration, in this wonderful, throbbing world! . . . And then Stephen tapped her on the shoulder, and cried a well-known name!

"Fleet Street, Theo! Allow me to introduce you. . . . Your special beat, my dear."

"My publishers! Where are my publishers?' cried Theo, loudly, as though she expected to see the heads of the great firms ranged in a body to greet her. The other occupants of the benches overheard her words, and gazed upon her with becoming awe. This was evidently a distinguished author! Note her well—consider her features, so that she may be recognised by the portraits in the shop windows! Philippa smiled whimsically at the thought that already Theo had made an impression. What further triumphs or humiliations had this Fleet Street in store for her?

Well, it was a wonderful drive! If St. Paul's had been impressive, what about that glorious pile of buildings at Westminster, and the first glimpse of the river by night? It was like a dream, a wonderful dream in which the imagined glories of the world passed in review before the eyes.

That night the girls were in the clouds, lifted far above mercenary anxieties, but they came back to earth again next morning when their boxes had been unpacked and stored away, and they were confronted with the all-important question of the next move. When lunch was over, silence fell suddenly upon the little room, and four pairs of eyes met in solemn conclave.

"I—er—I shall go round to the Slade School and make inquiries," said Madge quickly. "We are settled down now, and must lose no more time. I shall ask what is the very first day I can join."

"I shall write to Mr. Hammond, the Editor of *The Casket*. His firm publish books as well as the magazine, and he took most of father's things. I shall ask him if he can see me for ten minutes, as I am thinking of devoting myself to literature as a profession, and should be most grateful for his advice."

"I—er—I am going to pay a call at Hampstead!" said Hope, trying to look confident and self-possessed, but flushing a tell-tale pink all over her delicate face. "You remember the name of Miss Minnie Caldecott who sings some of father's songs? I found one of her cards, and she is at home every Tuesday afternoon. I thought if I went early I might see her before anyone else arrived. I have been working at that new song ever since you left, Phil, and it is pretty! It's the best thing I have written, and if she took a fancy to it, and promised to sing it at concerts, it would be so much easier to find a publisher. If I can summon courage I shall ask her to let me accompany her as well. . . . If I could sell a few songs, and make a little money by playing accompaniments, it would help to pay for my lessons."

Poor Hope! She looked at once so frightened, so eager, and so pretty, that her sisters broke into a simultaneous murmur of sympathy.

"I'll go with you!" said Philippa quickly. "You must have someone to support you, poor dear, and how, oh how are we going to find our way?"

"Ask the porter, downstairs. We shall have to go about alone, so the sooner we puzzle it out the better. Yes, do come, Phil! If you don't, I shall probably run away as soon as I've rung the bell. Will she be very formidable, do you think?"

Philippa did not know, could not conjecture. Professional singers existed for her only on the programmes of concerts. She had never heard one more celebrated than Miss James, the singing-mistress from Coventry. Sometimes, she believed, they were very rich, were paid fabulous prices for singing, but Minnie Caldecott did not seem to come in the first rank. Perhaps she, like themselves, was struggling to make her name.

The girls found their way to Hampstead with wonderfully little trouble, but it was more difficult to find Mayfield Road, and they wandered about for half an hour before discovering its whereabouts. It was not an attractive situation, neither was the house a palatial residence, and though Miss Caldecott was "At Home" as usual, the costume of the servant-maid left much to be desired. She led the way down a narrow entrance hall, and showed the visitors into a room at the back of the house, saying that Miss Caldecott would be with them in a few minutes' time. It

"'OH STEVE! THE TOP OF AN OMNIBUS—A DRIVE ALONG THE STREETS, WITH ALL THE LIGHTS!'"—(*p.* 633.)

was barely half-past three, yet two lamps were already burning under elaborate pink shades, and there was a profusion of flowers on the mantelpiece, and on the small tables with which the floor was crowded. The piano stood open with a litter of torn sheets on the top, and there were photographs, photographs everywhere, of extraordinary-looking people who all seemed to write their names underneath with fat quill pens, and many dashes. The lady with the little ring in the middle of her forehead was "Mabs;" the one swinging in a hammock was "Truda;" "Fanny" smirked from a bower of palms, and wore ropes and ropes of pearls round her neck. There was a framed photograph on the wall with a signature like the rest. From across the room Hope recognised a familiar name, and was about to rise to study it close at hand, when swish, swish, came the rustle of silken skirts, the door opened, and Miss Caldecott herself made her appearance.

CHAPTER VI.

SHE was tall and stout, she had waving hair, arched eyebrows and wore a slightly decolleté gown of blue silk, a trifle soiled if you looked at it in a critical spirit, but wonderfully elaborate and becoming. The broad, beaming face was young, and but for its undue size would have been strikingly pretty. She looked at the sisters, showing her straight, white teeth in the most friendly of smiles, and squeezed Hope's hand, until she winced with the pain.

"How do you do, dear!" she said. "How d' do, dear!" to Philippa. "Wretched day, isn't it? So good of you to come. Sit down and rest. I always flop on the sofa the moment I come in. So tiring dragging about, isn't it. And you are thin. Wait until you get fat like me!"

Her shoulders shook, her eyes danced, the dimples dipped in her round pink cheeks. Philippa and Hope were obliged to laugh in sympathy, but it was very embarrassing—she evidently mistook them for someone else! Hope cleared her throat, and began the rehearsed explanation.

"I am Hope Charrington and this is my sister. You knew my father by name at least. You used to sing some of his songs!"

Miss Caldecott looked blank, then she began to laugh. It appeared that she was always laughing.

"Then I didn't know you, after all. Heaps of people come to see me, and I've the silliest memory—always forget what I ought to remember. Doesn't make much difference, does it? I know you *now!* Sung your father's songs, did I? Charrington! Charrington! Don't remember. What were they called, do you know?"

Hope's heart sank. She had expected the name to act as an open sesame, and it was not even recognised.

"One was 'A Song of Summer,'" she said slowly, "and another 'Into the Night.'"

"La-la-la-La! Ta-ta-ta-Ta! Refrain went like that, didn't it? I remember! Pretty change in the second verse. High G sustained in the last bar. I used to bless him when I came to that note. And he is dead, you say? What a pity! So clever, too! Do you compose? You have a musical face."

Here was a lead, indeed! Hope flushed with eagerness, and her voice broke with a little nervous tremor. Miss Caldecott was so friendly, so open, so far removed from being formidable that it was impossible to believe that she could refuse her request.

"Oh, yes, I do. That's what I came to speak to you about to-day. We have come up to London to try to find work . . . we are very poor. As you had liked father's songs, I was going to ask if you would be so very very kind as to try one of mine. I brought one with me now. Messrs. Holding and Co. published one for me before, and if you liked this, and would promise to sing it, they would be so much more willing to accept it. It is very bold of me to ask. I am horribly nervous, but you are so kind."

Miss Caldecott laughed, and shook her head.

"Not in business matters, dear," she said. "I have to keep my wits about me in business. If you knew the shoals of things I have sent to me! But I hate to say no. Got the song with you, do you say? Strum it over like a dear, and let me hear how it goes. Sing it too, if you can. I've got a horrid cold."

Hope rose eagerly. She had been prepared for this, and was less nervous in playing than in speaking. The piano was delightful, she was tingling to do her best—to make the most of her opportunity, and she played the introductory bars with a dainty finish which brought Miss Caldecott's eyes upon her with an appreciatory flash. She listened in silence to the first verse, nodding her head to and fro, then turned to Philippa with another beaming smile.

"Nice little pipe, hasn't she? Sweet and simple like herself. I say!—it wouldn't go far in the Albert Hall, would it? Let *me* try a verse!" She put down her hands on either side, lifted herself up from her low chair, and went over to the piano. "What are the words? Oh, I can see. Fire away then, and I'll see what I can make of it . . . 'Pack clouds away, and welcome day—with night we'll banish sor-row.' Funny words, dear! Where did you get hold of them? It's not bad, you know, not half bad! What I call graceful. Let's try again, and go on to the next verse."

This time she drew herself up, and sang with careful attention. The full rich tones of her voice flooded the room, and Hope thrilled with delight at the sound of her own creation. Never, no never, had she imagined that it could be so charming, and the last verse was the prettiest of all. Surely if Miss Caldecott liked the beginning, she would be enraptured with the end!

But alas! at the conclusion of the second verse, Miss Caldecott crossed the room and threw herself on the sofa with a resoundant yawn.

"Thanks awfully, dear. How clever of you! It really is sweet. Doesn't quite suit my voice, though, does it? And I don't like those accidentals. They are tricky, and I'm such a careless

creature. Where did you pick up the words? I don't know the author, but you can tell him from me that he can't write songs. Not at all catchy words. He'll have to do better than that. Don't sit perched up there any more, dear, you look so uncomfortable. There'll be some other people coming presently and we'll have tea. I bought some lovely cakes from Buszard's. Always make a bit of a splash on my at-home afternoons you know, for it's the only entertaining I do. I'm in digs. here, and very bad they are too. But what can one do? They don't send for me to the Albert Hall, dear. It's a shame, for I could do ever so much better than some of those old, worn-out things who only trade on a name. My voice is fresh, and a jolly good one too, though I say it myself. Where are *you* living, dear? In this neighbourhood?"

Philippa replied. Hope was too disappointed, too cast down to be able to speak. Miss Caldecott had seemed so pleased, the song had sounded so charming from her lips; at one minute acceptance had seemed certain, at the next the subject was waved aside, and apparently dismissed from consideration. She pressed her lips together and stared at the mantelpiece with its bank of chrysanthemums in cream jars, its photographs of becurled beauties. Philippa was talking about the flat, and removal expenses generally, and Miss Caldecott was lavishing floods of sympathy upon her, and abuse upon those who had disappointed or thwarted her plans.

"Wretched, good-for-nothing things, the pack of them! But you are so near Maple's. Why don't you go to Maple and let him do the whole thing? Expense! Bills! Oh, bother bills! You can let them run, you know. *I* do! If I want a thing, I get it, and think about the bill afterwards. Do you like this tea-gown? I bought it at the autumn sales. Such a bargain! I have to spend a fortune in clothes. What would you advise me to get for this winter, for really swell affairs, you know? I go to a good many private receptions. I got some patterns this morning. I look so huge in white. What would you think of yellow—eh? Blue is so ordinary."

"Really, I—really, I don't know." Philippa thought it was better to laugh outright than in a covert manner, so she laughed as she spoke, and Miss Caldecott joined in the strain with the greatest good humour.

"I'm sure you have good taste, dear. You look so stylish. I never wear black myself; it makes me doleful. I do get doleful sometimes, though you wouldn't think it. I live all alone, and sometimes business gets so slack. I get plenty of suburban work, but I don't come to the front somehow. Can't think why. My voice is far better than that of Marah Bryce whom they rave about nowadays. Have you heard her lately?"

Philippa felt relieved to be able to reply in the negative, and Miss Caldecott enlarged at great length on the personal deformities, mental blemishes, and vocal limitations of her rival and even condescended to imitate her rendering of a favourite song.

"High-flown rubbish, I call it. Something like that song of yours," she said blandly, turning to Hope. "You might offer it to her. Far more her style than mine. Don't you say I sent you, though!"

"Thank you," said Hope softly. "I think I should hardly . . . I don't know her at all, so it's quite different. You knew our name at least, and I thought—I hoped . . ." Despite herself, Hope's voice broke with a little quiver of disappointment, for she had counted so much on this woman's help, and if she refused, what could be expected from a stranger on whom she had no possible claim for sympathy? Her face looked so drawn and pale that Miss Caldecott's good nature could not look at it unmoved.

"What's the matter, dear? Disappointed? Hateful of me, isn't it, but I couldn't sing that song even to please you. I'll tell you what we will do—you shall write another especially for me! Mezzo soprano, you know. I don't mind a G now and then, but don't let me have them too often, and be sure to give me a catchy refrain. Something the people want to move their feet to at the end of the second verse—see? Then the words must be domestic. I want a song badly, to sing down Clapham way, and places like that, for charities, and subscription concerts. Let me see . . . something about children, I think . . . Nothing fetches them like children. First verses, major, 'Happily homeward the children go'—and about their little troubles, you know, and their little fears—little smiles and little tears. There! that's rhyme. I believe I could write it myself. Then comes the refrain—a little swing to it, a little lilt—the same words for the first two verses. 'Twilight has fallen, the children asleep, Little hands folded, sweet limbs at rest.' Oh, you know the kind of thing! Something to make the mothers cry and the papas rush off to buy the song next morning. Nothing draws so well as children. And you might change to the minor key at the third verse, and point a moral. We are all children, life's a journey, and we shall grow tired too, and fall asleep at the end of our day. There! Never say I didn't give you an

idea. You write that for me, and we'll make a fortune out of it!"

"Thank you, oh how kind you are! I see it exactly. I'll try my very best. It is so very, very good of you to give me the chance."

Miss Caldecott yawned wearily. "So close, isn't it," she said, "I hate this muggy weather. Some people say it's good for the complexion, but I don't believe it. I use that new American powder. Have you tried it? There's the bell! I expect it is the Elliotts. They said they were coming."

"HOPE ROSE EAGERLY. SHE WAS TINGLING TO DO HER BEST, TO MAKE THE MOST OF HER OPPORTUNITY."—(*p.* 636.)

"Then perhaps we ought to . . . We have stayed a long time already," said Philippa, rising. "Thank you so very much for seeing us at all."

"Oh, won't you wait for tea! Good-bye, dear!" cried Miss Caldecott all in one breath, and without waiting for a reply to her question, and the girls went out into the narrow passage, to squeeze their way past three tall, smartly-dressed girls who were engaged in arranging their veils and pulling out their fringes before the little strip of mirror in the hat-stand. The sisters walked down the street in silence, turned the corner and exchanged bright, amused glances.

"Our first introduction into professional circles! How very, very funny she was! How many times did she call us 'dear,' I wonder! Not very formidable, was she?"

"But oh what a lovely voice! So rich and full. I suppose it is because she has not had a thorough musical education that she hasn't come to the front, and because she isn't quite—quite—. But it is a shame to criticise," cried loyal Hope. "How kind she was! How perfectly sweet of her to ask me to write that song. Phil, Phil! don't you think I am fortunate? Don't you think it's a good beginning? I have an idea for the song already, and she is almost sure to take it—it is as good as a commission."

Philippa looked at the shining eyes, the curling lips, and could not endure to breathe discouragement, but in her heart of hearts she reflected that she should be sorry indeed, to place any reliance upon the promises of Miss Minnie Caldecott!

CHAPTER VII.

THEO was pressed into the service to write the words for Miss Caldecott's song, and composed a graceful little ditty which was sufficiently touching, even to the spinster mind, and might surely be trusted to melt the hearts of parents "in the front rows." The task kept her happy and occupied while waiting for the answer to her letter. Mr. Hammond was both prompt and kind in his reply.

"I shall be happy to give what help I can to your father's daughter," he wrote. "He always appeared to me to have a very special gift, and I regretted that he did not cultivate it to the full. I hope that you have inherited his powers, but at the same time I feel it my duty to beg you to

earnestly consider the matter before deciding on your life's work. Many young people seem to imagine that they can 'take up literature' as they would typewriting, or clerical work, which is a vast mistake, and it would be cruel to encourage you, unless you possess the inherent qualifications. Would it not be better, for the aiding of my judgment, if, before coming to see me, you forwarded some *short* MS. for my perusal? The time at my disposal is limited, but I will contrive to read anything you send before, say, Monday or Wednesday, when I shall be pleased to see you at any time that may be convenient between eleven and one."

The letter was read aloud at the breakfast table, and the family commented on it, with the candour which distinguishes family conclaves.

"Very sensible! Short, and to the point. How can he tell what sort of rubbish you write!"

"Hope you notice the dash under the 'short'! No chance for your novel, my dear! He doesn't see himself sitting down to read hundreds of pages of your appalling fist. Grows more like lattice-work every day."

"I can just imagine what he is like! A proper little person, with a shiny bald head. Fancy writing love scenes for his inspection. My hat!"

"The worst of it is, I don't know what to send. I have nothing short that's good enough. It ought to be striking, arresting, original. I—I want an idea!" cried poor Theo, staring frantically at the coffee cups, and wrinkling her brow until she looked ten years older on the spot. "It's finding a subject that is the hardest part. I love the writing, when I'm once well started. I can't possibly send anything before next week!"

"Don't try! Take your time, and do your very, very best. Send a letter to say you will forward a MS. in the course of the next few weeks. It's important that you should send your best work, and you can't write happily with a feeling of hurry. It must be a story, of course, not an article."

"Mind you have a nice hero! Six feet high; broad shoulders; big moustache."

"No, no, clean shaven! Clean shaven, with a firm, determined chin. Big feet and hands, quick tempered, but too sweet for anything to the girl he loves."

"Make her slim and willowy, with grey eyes, rather wistful looking, not exactly pretty, but 'a way with her' that simply mows 'em down!"

"Give her some spirit, mind! I hate your mawkish heroines. Sort of creature you would call 'The Maiden.' Don't call her 'The Maiden,' Theo, if you wish me to buy a copy, and whatever you do, I pray and beseech you don't write in the present tense! 'I am leaning against a stile, the roses are falling in heavy clusters by my side, the rays of the sun are pouring on my uncovered head, and turning to gold the wayward curls which refuse to lie straight, despite all my efforts!' Don't you know the kind of thing? I feel inclined to throw a book in the fire when it begins like that? Don't let your heroine have 'wayward curls,' Theo! Don't let her have 'little tendrils wandering over her brow.' Don't say in every chapter that 'she had never looked more lovely,' and for goodness sake don't let the husband and wife behave like idiots, and quarrel all the time, though they are really expiring of love!"

"Well, really! Any more instructions? It's a pity you don't write the whole thing while you are about it!" said Theo, testily, as she pushed her chair from the table. The family had grown to dread the times when Theo was settling on a plot for a new story. She was so restless; she wandered about in such an aimless manner; she looked so thoroughly worried and unhappy. Sometimes the girls would try to help her with suggestions, and then she would listen with a forbearing smile, and say, "Oh thank you. Yes! It's *very* good. I should think a capital story might be made out of it, but somehow it doesn't appeal to me!"

At other times when they were never thinking of helping, and were engaged in what seemed the most ordinary conversation, Theo would suddenly clap her hands, and cry, "Oh that will do. Good! *Now* I've got it!" and rush excitedly from the room, leaving her sisters to discuss what in the world they had said that could possibly suggest a romance. Verily an author in the household was a difficult person with whom to deal!

For the next few days Theo sat alone in her room making futile efforts at a beginning; went out for long walks along the crowded streets, or sat shivering on the seats in the Park. In deference to her condition, Hope kept away from the piano while she was at home, but no sooner was the door closed behind her, than she flew to try the effect of the new song, and to alter and re-alter the more troublesome bars. She must practise too, for with the hope of public work before her, it would never do to lose her execution and flexibility of finger. Already she was making arrangements for lessons in harmony, and her time seemed filling up.

In the energy which distinguishes all beginnings, Hope practised scales and exercises for a good three hours one Saturday afternoon, and to-

wards the end of the time was much exercised to account for the meaning of a thumping noise that seemed to rise from the ground beneath her feet. She stopped playing, the noise stopped also; she began again, the noise was repeated. Philippa, summoned to decide whether or no they were the proud possessors of a unique sort of echo, immediately arrived at a more prosaic explanation.

"It's someone knocking from underneath. It must be the Hermit, that bachelor creature who lives just below. He wants you to stop."

"What cheek!" cried Hope. She was, as a rule, discreet and punctilious in her language, but there are points upon which the meekest among us are keenly sensitive, and when it came to interference with her practising, propriety flew to the winds. "What *hateful* cheek! What right has he to interfere? Has he hired the whole building? Does he think we are going to consult *him* about what we do! What next, indeed? I'll try chromatics now, and see how he will like them. Cheek! Abominable cheek!" She went to work more vigorously than ever, and Philippa thought it prudent to refrain from interference. She contented herself with hurrying on tea. That night there was no more knocking; presumably the chromatics had reduced the listener to a condition of helpless despair.

On the third evening Theo made her appearance wearing her best fichu, and with a face wreathed in smiles. "I've got it!" she announced, and there was no need to ask to what she referred. The tension was over for the time being, and the young author worked up her subject with the usual enjoyment. When the story was finished, the girls begged for a private reading, a request against which, as a rule, the author steadily set her face, so that as usual the first response was a refusal.

"I can't. It is too cold-blooded. The members of one's own family are too painfully critical. I'd rather face a dozen editors than you three girls!"

"Very unkind of you, then, that's all I have to say! You know how interested we are; and if we *are* critical, surely it's better to discuss faults with us, than let them go uncorrected! This is a special story, and in consideration of our anxiety——"

"Oh, well!" said Theo, unwillingly, "I'll read it if you like. Get your sewing, and don't stare at me all the time. It's quite short. You won't like it, I expect. Let me sit near the lamp!"

She was evidently nervous, and her voice was decidedly shaky for the first few pages; but after that she forgot herself, and read with expression and power. If one of the girls moved, she looked up with a frown, and when Madge groaned and clasped her hands over her heart at a particularly touching part of the love story, Theo stopped short, and fixed her with a basilisk glare. It was a story of a truly modern type, which, so to speak, began at the end, and worked slowly but surely back to the beginning. It was by no means certain, too, what the heroine did, or why she did it, and if one had been sceptically-minded, one would have doubted whether the author knew herself. Hope was puzzled, Madge engrossed and curious, but Philippa was frankly bored. Her own nature was straightforward and outspoken, and she had no patience with what seemed to be wilful obtuseness. Her attention waned as a Martha-like anxiety seized her in its grip; her eyes wandered to the clock, and her brow grew furrowed. Alas! for the trials of the author in the household. At the very moment when Theo was preparing to deliver the crucial sentence, on which hung the very construction of the plot; in that thrilling moment wherein she paused and drew breath the better to deliver it with due emphasis and dramatic effect, a clear, anxious voice claimed precedence, and cried loudly:

"*Hope!* It's after five. *Did* you remember to order the fish?"

It was too much for flesh and blood to endure! Up bounced Theo, down dashed the MS. on the table, bang went the door after her departing figure, smash came the echo of door number two, as she fled to her bedroom for refuge.

The two younger sisters stared across the room with eyes large with reproach.

"Phil, how could you? How cruel! At the most exciting point! How could you do it?"

"I'm sorry!" said Philippa; and she really looked it. "I didn't mean to vex her; but. . . . Steve will be home in less than an hour, and there is only cold meat. I was anxious about the fish. Was there much more to read? You might finish it, and then we can tell her what we think of it. I don't like it, do you?"

"It's clever!" said Madge, decidedly. "It's atrociously clever. I'm dying to know how it ends."

But when the MS. was finished, Madge's curiosity remained unsatisfied, for what happened to the heroine was as uncertain as everything else in her career.

Theo did not make her appearance again until dinner was on the table, when she came into the room with her head in the air, and her lip curled in disdain. "I have to live with these poor, grovelling worms, but at least I need not asso-

ciate with them!" So said her expression as plainly as words could speak; she had, however, reckoned without her sense of humour, which fortunately for her readers was particularly acute, and no sooner was the cover removed from the belated fish than her lips began to twitch, and her eyes to twinkle. Her cheeks grew red, her shoulders heaved, and finally out came a great burst of laughter, and there she sat, rocking to and fro in her chair, gasping out short, strangled sentences, with her hands gripped convulsively over her heart.

"Oh-h! Oh! *Have you ordered the fish?* The *Fish!!* Oh, a prophet—is not a prophet. FISH!! Oh!"

"Might make a joke somehow about fish and Jonah, mightn't you?" said Madge, laughing scarcely less heartily in the relief of seeing Theo descend from her high horse. "I can't quite see how it is to be done, but it has possibilities. I finished reading your story, my dear, and I feel inclined to shake you. Why couldn't you make a happy ending while you were about it?"

"Too commonplace!" said the author, scornfully. "You didn't expect me to make them 'live happily ever after,' did you? I haven't quite descended to that, I hope. Well, what do you think of it?"

"I don't like it nearly so well as some of your others. I was sorry that I interrupted you, dear; but I am afraid it was because I didn't like it. I loved that pretty little story about the poor governess, and the rich lover who came home from Australia. Do send that to Mr. Hammond. It is really so very much nicer!"

"Nicer!" repeated Theo; "Pretty!" Her voice rang with an incredulous disdain. "I want something strong, and powerful. Hope! What do *you* think? Don't you like it, either?"

Hope wrinkled her brows, and looked puzzled and distressed.

"I can't decide. It's so queer! Does it really mean that she marries him in the end, or that she refuses him because she loves him? I keep thinking, and thinking, and it is so confusing."

"It is the most maddening story I ever read," chimed in Madge, decisively, "for it tells you nothing that you want to know, and it makes you want to know so much that you can hardly live for suspense. You ought to hate that exasperating girl, and yet you feel that life is not worth living without her. I will say for you, my dear, that you have achieved the most worrying, unsatisfactory muddle I can possibly imagine. I believe I shall dream of it to-night!"

"Hurrah!" cried Theo. "Hurrah!" And she tossed her bread in the air, and caught it again with a wave of triumph. "I *am* pleased! I won't alter a single word, but send it off to-night. If Hope keeps worrying about it when she is awake, and you dream of it when you are

"WHEN THEO'S STORY WAS FINISHED, THE GIRLS BEGGED FOR A PRIVATE READING."—(*p.* 640.)

asleep, I don't want any higher praise. Never mind if the impression is painful, it *is* an impression, and that's the great object of story-telling. Thank you both. I'm so relieved."

"Humph," muttered Philippa, shortly, and added something under her breath about "Executions making a painful impression, if you came to that!" which the others judiciously affected not to hear. Phil had her own grievance by this time, for it is not pleasant to have one's criticisms overlooked as beneath consideration, and to be calmly ignored by artistic striplings as a good, commonplace creature, who cannot be expected to rise to the intellectual level of her companions. Like all housekeepers, Philippa experienced moments of weariness and revolt against the everlasting "trivial round;" moments of longing for a more interesting life-work; and at such times the attitude of her younger sisters made her lot doubly hard. She struggled against the temptation to say something sharp and cutting, and Stephen, watching her face from the other end of the table, divined the hidden thoughts. He was not a brilliant, nor, to outsiders, a particularly interesting young fellow, but just one of those true, kindly, single-hearted men who are born to make some woman's life safe and happy, and as, so far, Philippa was his lady love, he could not rest while that shadow was on her brow. Before they went to bed he made an excuse to call her into the dining-room, and to lead the conversation in such a direction that she should give him her confidence.

"It is a little hard, isn't it?" she said wistfully. "You saw how Theo ignored my criticism, and the others never seemed to notice. I work for them all day long, keeping the house comfortable, and mending their things, to set them free for their own work, and then I am despised for it. It makes me mad, Steve, and, worse still, it makes me sad!"

"Poor old girl!" said Steve softly. He leant his elbows on the mantelpiece and ruffled his hair nervously. If Philippa had been his wife he would have taken her in his arms, and spoken all that was in his heart, but a man feels an embarrassment in "letting himself go" before a sister, which is not known in the nearer and dearer relationship. He wanted to say that the woman who makes a home, has achieved a greater and nobler work than any mere book or picture, and that in his eyes, at least, she was first and best. But he had a horror of appearing sentimental, and what he really said, was: "Horribly bad form! Upsetting young cubs. They will get a little of the starch knocked out of them when they find what a poor place they take among the rest!"

"Oh, I don't want that! I want them to succeed," cried Philippa quickly, and then she began to laugh, and to look herself again. "We are like a nice, prosaic old father and mother, Steve, whose children are so alarmingly clever that we are half afraid of them! I am glad you are ordinary like myself. You wouldn't be half such a strength to me if you were a genius, too!"

"Poor old girl!" said Steve again, and let his hand drop on her shoulder with a helpful grip. He did not say that she could trust him to stand by her always, and to uphold her in every difficulty, but she understood the unspoken promise, and went to bed soothed and comforted.

Theo's MS. was posted to Mr. Hammond, and in due course an answer was received containing no reference to the story, but simply naming an hour for the proposed interview. The young author tried to read signs of increased deference and respect for her attainments between the lines, but even her optimism failed in the attempt. She grew nervous as the time approached, and looked decidedly pale as she partook of a strengthening cup of cocoa before dressing for the important expedition.

"What are you going to wear?" Madge inquired, and the author curled her lip in disdain.

"My dear, how ridiculous! As if it mattered! Do you suppose for one moment that it would make any difference to Mr. Hammond whether I looked charming, or a perfect fright? Are you so innocent as to believe that he would accept a story that he didn't like from the greatest beauty on earth?"

"Humph!" said Madge, reflectively. "The heart of man is desperately wicked! Not *that* story, perhaps, but he would be much more willing to look at another. Take my advice and put on your toque. A girl never loses anything by making herself attractive when dealing with a man. I have never met any editors, but I have reason to suppose that they are not different from the rest of mankind!"

"Nineteen, and country-bred! Where did your worldly wisdom come from, my dear?" cried Theo, holding up her hands in astonishment. But she wore her toque all the same, and took off her veil three times over because one little curl refused to lie exactly in the right place. She desired, above all things, to arouse Mr. Hammond's interest and sympathy.

The first visit to a publisher's office! It was a nervous occasion, and Theo walked once, twice, thrice past the dreaded door before summoning

courage to enter. A board on the wall informed her that she must mount to the third storey, so she raised her skirts, ascended a narrow, and not too clean staircase, and stood outside a door labelled "Office" wondering what to do next. Neither knocker nor bell was to be seen, what then was she to do? If she tapped on the pane, and waited for the door to be opened, she would appear humble and amateurish; if she entered unannounced, it would seem bold and presumptuous. She determined to err rather on the side of overrating her own importance, hoping thereby to prove the truth of the old adage. So turning the handle with a firm hand, she walked into the office, and found herself confronted by—a small and shabby boy, perched on a high stool!

All this fuss about a child! Theo's indignation lent an added haughtiness to her manner, as she demanded to see the editor of *The Casket*, and Jack-in-Office stared at her curiously, up and down, down and up, before he replied. His expression seemed to imply that he had seen her like before, and that he more than suspected a MS. tied with blue ribbon hidden skilfully beneath her coat.

"Have you an appointment?" he asked severely, and though Theo affected a smile of superiority, she felt an inward conviction that without that same appointment she would have been compelled to make her way to Mr. Hammond's presence over the dead body of his vassal. As it was he carried away her card, and came back almost immediately to escort her to the editor's room, where he pointed to a chair, and remarked encouragingly that Mr. Hammond would be disengaged in a few minutes' time. Theo threw a glance at her reflection in a dusty mirror, and seated herself with much the same tremulous sinking of heart as that with which she was accustomed to settle herself in the dentist's chair. On the desk before her lay a litter of papers and proofs; her eye fell absently on the slip nearest to herself, and lightened into eager interest. Here was a treat indeed, for what she saw was the next month's instalment of a powerful serial, as to the termination of which the sisters had frequently and hotly debated. A sentence here, a sentence there, gave the needed clues, and she smiled with mischievous delight at the advantage she had gained. That evening she would lead the conversation to the Count and his lady, and would give graphic prophesies of the next stage in their adventures. Even the conversations she would foretell, so that when the new number arrived, her character of Wizard would indeed be fully established. The interesting prospect dispelled her nervousness, and she was smiling to herself in bright, natural fashion when the door opened and Mr. Hammond appeared.

The editor was short and dark, middle-aged, and carelessly dressed; an undignified little figure, on whom the literary aspirant looked with instant lightening of heart. "I'm not afraid of *him!*" she told herself, but the thought was no sooner formed than revoked, for Mr. Hammond spoke, and at the first sound of his voice, he became aloof, formidable—a personage! He greeted the girl kindly enough, but Theo felt strangely humbled as she faced him, and realised with painful clearness that she was a girl, a tyro, and that this man was accustomed to associate with the master minds of his day. Her complacency about the "worrying" story fell from her like a cloak, and she awaited his verdict with sickening suspense.

"It is very kind of you to see me. I know you are busy . . . I sent you a MS. as you asked for one. I suppose you—received it!"

"Yes." Mr. Hammond's face gave no clue as to his opinion of the masterpiece in question. "I am pleased to see you, and to give you any help in my power. As I said in my note, I had a great admiration for your father. And so you have determined to settle in town, and enter the great arena?"

"Yes. We are very poor, and must work for ourselves. I have been writing for my own amusement ever since I was a child, and I love it. If it were possible to make a livelihood in that way I should like it better than anything else. I would rather live on half the money, and do the work I love." She looked appealingly at the impassive face, but no approval of her prospective renunciation was forthcoming. Mr. Hammond merely bent his head in grave assent and remarked:—

"Literature is a good crutch, but a very inefficient staff. If you have no private means, and are seeking for a profession which is to be your entire support, you would be wiser to go in for millinery. Brain work is uncertain, trying, and badly paid. Even at the best, an author's spell of popularity is short-lived in these degenerate days. A new writer comes along with a fresh trick, and the old friend is promptly forgotten and despised. For the sake of £ s. d. he is compelled to write twice as much as he ought, and so dooms himself even more completely. In millinery, I should suppose, experience adds to capacity, and the demand for bonnets is a happy certainty."

This time it was the editor who smiled, and

Theo who was unresponsive. She was deeply offended, and hope had sunk to the lowest ebb. Surely if Mr. Hammond had found any merit in her story he would not have humiliated her by such a suggestion. She lowered her eyes, and trifled nervously with her furs.

"Then you think—after reading my story—you think I have no chance?"

"No. I don't say that. That depends entirely upon——"

"Yes?"

Mr. Hammond looked at her with a kindly pity. "*Upon how much heart-breaking you can stand!*" he said solemnly. "The apprenticeship which you will have to serve is weeks, months, it may be even years of steady, persistent, unsuccessful work. Weary disappointment after weary disappointment—nothing to show for your labour but a drawer full of dog-eared papers which nobody will accept. Realise what it means, and ask yourself if you have strength to bear it; if you have sufficient courage and self-confidence to work on undaunted, and find fresh inspiration in the midst of defeat!"

He looked at her gravely, and Theo lifting her head, returned the look with flashing eyes.

"If I had the prospect of success in the end—yes! a hundred times, yes! I am not a child. I don't expect to make a name in a day. You can judge better than I. Is there a chance for me if I work hard? Have I a gift which is worth cultivating? You promised to tell me the truth, and I ask it of you now."

Then for the first time Mr. Hammond gave a hint of encouragement. He smiled whimsically, as at an amusing recollection, and studied the girl's face with a new interest.

"Oh, yes; you have the faculty. It is there, there is no doubt it is there. I read your story, and with all its faults it escapes the two unpardonable crimes—it is neither dull nor commonplace. I don't pretend to say that you will be a great writer, but when you have learned your trade you will probably be able to place your stories with little difficulty. Study style; study the best masters; don't think any time wasted that is given to cultivating pure, forcible English. Study the people around you, and write of what you *know*, not of what you imagine only. It is difficult to describe an emotion which one has never felt, or a life in which one has no part. Study the magazines also, and note what style is adopted by each, the length of story taken, and so on. These things are but the technicalities of the profession, but the mastery of them will save you needless disappointments. When a MS. is returned for the sixth time, put it away for a month, then read it over in a critical spirit, and try to discover wherein the fault lies. A little altering and rewriting may make it a marketable article."

"Y-es!" said Theo, faintly. That "sixth time" fell sadly on her ear, for it was one thing to assert that one did not expect to win in a day, and quite another to hear repeated failure predicted in that cool, unemotional fashion. She wondered if Mr. Hammond would refer to her story in any more definite fashion, and seeing that he began to play with the papers on his desk, as if to intimate that the "five minutes" were drawing to a close, she summoned courage to put a direct question.

"And the MS. that I sent you, Mr. Hammond—was it pretty good? Do you think it suitable for—er—for——"

Her courage failed as he looked up in grave inquiry, and she dared not say *The Casket*, as she had intended. Mr. Hammond finished her sentence unconsciously, as if he had not divined the unspoken word.

"Publication? There would be no harm in trying. I have read many less interesting stories, though it bears the mark of inexperience. Try some of the smaller papers like *The Companion*, and, if necessary, cut it down to their length. I have it here in this drawer, I think. Yes—thank you. Pleased to have seen you!"

Theo rose to her feet a-smart with mortification. To be recommended to *The Companion*, and advised to cut down her masterpiece for the approval of its two-penny-halfpenny editor, was humiliation, indeed, for the would-be contributor to *The Casket*. She followed Mr. Hammond to the door, and held out her hand in silence, her only desire to end the painful interview at once. But the smitten look on the young face, the sudden collapse of the former audacious complacency, were too marked to pass unnoticed. The editor looked at her, and recalled suddenly his own youth, when a kind word was as a magic wand, and a harsh one shut the door so hopelessly against a cherished dream! He gave her hand an encouraging pressure.

"You have the stuff in you—you have the stuff! Work hard, and when you have served your apprenticeship come back to me, and I'll help you all I can. Send me one MS. in three months—not more. If you send more I shan't read them. When one is accepted you will have reached the first rung of the ladder. No, don't thank me! I

will accept nothing from you, or from anyone else, that does not deserve a place on its own merits. Good morning!"

His eyes fell on the roll of paper in her hand. He pointed to it with one finger.

"Don't-er, don't overdo it," he said, meaningly. "Don't try to be *too* clever."

Then the door shut, and Theo groped her way down the dark stairs. Her cheeks were crimson; she beat the banisters savagely with the paper roll. Jack-in-Office looked out of his open door and grinned to himself in amused understanding. He had seen "them" look like that before.

CHAPTER VIII.

THEO'S pride made her represent the interview with Mr. Hammond in its most favourable light to her sisters. He was satisfied that she had the makings of a successful author, was anxious to consider MSS. from time to time, and had suggested a likely home for the present story. The future, in fact, was assured, but a period of probation must necessarily elapse while she served what he called her "apprenticeship." The girls appeared duly impressed, and Theo felt with satisfaction that this verdict from a high authority would go far towards procuring for her that respect and admiration which it is so difficult to obtain from the members of one's own family.

"He advises me to read a great deal, to study the styles of the best masters, and to write only what I know. I think that is rather a mistake! If one possesses the literary instinct, it must surely be possible to project oneself, as it were, into the place of another, and so create an environment. How can one be expected to experience personally the whole gamut of human emotions?"

"Cast your ruminating eye upon me, my love!" said Madge suavely, pointing with a thin forefinger to herself. Behind Theo's back she had been occupied in rolling her eyes and waving her hands in dramatic illustration of the other's high-flown phrases, so that Hope had rushed to the window to stare at the chimney pots, while Philippa had dropped her needle on the floor, and grovelled on all fours in order to redeem it. The two returned to their seats with expressions of preternatural gravity, and Madge continued to declaim her offers of help.

"Study *my* character. It is full of rich and unexpected qualities. When you get to an *impasse*, ask my advice, and I'll tell you how I should behave in the circumstances. Though young in years I am old in wisdom, and you would go far

"'YOUR ULTIMATE SUCCESS DEPENDS ON HOW MUCH HEART-BREAKING YOU CAN STAND,' SAID THE EDITOR."—(*p.* 644.)

before you discovered a better coach." Theo laughed with good-natured disdain.

"Old in experience, indeed! Poor little country mouse, what do you know of life? You have never even been in love!"

"Oh, haven't I though! Shows how little you know!" cried Madge, darkly. "I have never been out of it, since I was eight years old. The first one was Tommy Egerton—do you remember those Egertons who took the Chase for a year? Tommy was the little boy who wore a brown coat with a sealskin collar, and dear little brown gaiters. I doted on him, and one day his mother brought him to call, and I had on a soiled pinafore. Oh my feelings! I consider that my character has been warped for life by the humiliation that I endured that afternoon. . . . Then there was that freckled boy who used to send me valentines —'The rose is red, the violet blue, And sugar's sweet, and so are you.' Dear, dear! how bashful I felt the first time I met him after that special valentine arrived. Then there was the curate who spoke through his 'dose.' That was the love that was born of pity! Everyone abused him, so there arose in my heart that almost maternal tenderness and compassion which is inseparable from the love of every good woman. Ahem!" Madge glanced up with dancing eyes, then grew grave again, and added slowly: "And now there's that student at the Slade School!—I asked him some questions the other day, and he was so kind. He has a lovely chin! I expect we shall be great friends . . . Look at Philippa growing pale with anxiety!"

"It's all very well," said Philippa, irritably, "I like young men myself, and wish we knew many more than we do, but we *must* be careful! I hope you girls will not make any friends until you have had time to judge whether they are the sort of people we ought to know. I don't want to preach. I hate preaching. It is very hard on me to be in the position when it falls to me to say all the disagreeable things, but situated as we are, we can hardly be too particular. We want to make friends who will be a help to us, not a hindrance, and whose influence can never be hurtful to Barney when he is with us."

The mention of Barney brought a smile to each face, followed by sighs of anxiety, for it was impossible not to realise that the reckless, high-spirited boy would be a care, as well as a pleasure. Stephen was already looking out for a suitable opening in the City, and with Philippa's consent, had written to Mr. Loftus to ask his assistance in the search. As an influential shareholder in many large concerns it was likely that he would be able to find a situation, and his kindness of heart made it seem probable that he would put himself to some trouble on the boy's behalf. So far no letter had been received in reply, but one afternoon, about five o'clock, the electric bell sounded through the little flat, and Hope ran to open the door to save trouble to the one small servant who was wrestling with preparations for the evening meal. She thought it might possibly be the postman with a letter from Miss Caldecott to say how delighted she was with the new song, but instead, she found herself confronted by two life-sized fashion plates, and, hidden away behind flowing skirts and ruffling chiffons, one small and dejected lord of creation! The Loftus trio! Aunt Loftus come to pay her first call, on the very occasion when Mary had set fire to the pretty lamp-shade, so that the smell of burning pervaded the air, and a naked "chimney" took the place of rosy frills; when Philippa had felt too tired to change her morning blouse, and naughty Madge had taken advantage of an idle hour to wash her hair, and was even now stretched before the fire in all the glory of a dressing-gown, too old to be spoiled! Hope was speechless with consternation, but with the drawing-room distant about two yards from the front door escape was hopeless, and she was obliged to introduce the visitors with what composure she might. To the credit of their breeding, be it said, Philippa and Madge rose nobly to the occasion, and welcomed the unwelcome guests without either apology or confusion. Madge smiled sweetly through her wisps of hair, and discussed the weather in orthodox fashion before sailing out of the room to clothe herself in more suitable attire. Hope was proud of her sisters, and unselfishly annoyed that she should appear to better advantage than they, for she had dressed early after her return from a wet and tiring walk. She met her cousin's curious gaze, and sat down beside her with a friendly smile.

"You are Avice. I have so often wondered about you!"

"You are Hope. I have a picture of you as a little girl. It is so pretty. You haven't changed a bit!"

"Oh, oh, you shouldn't! But how nice of you all the same. I love compliments!" confessed pretty Hope, blushing in bewitching fashion between gratification and embarrassment. She looked at Avice in her turn, and decided that she was not at all pretty. But, oh, what clothes! What a dream of a hat; what distracting ruffles, and laces peeping from between the sables; what twinkling lights of diamond brooches! She

paused for a moment to do obeisance before a vision of herself clad in similar garments, then continued with a smile: "I am so glad to meet you. It feels lonely in this great London to be absolutely without friends, and so far we know no one at all."

"You are the musical one, aren't you?" Avice asked curiously. "You are all geniuses, father says, and determined to make a name in the world. Have you begun work? What have you done so far?"

Hope smiled with pardonable satisfaction.

"Well, really, I think we have made a good start! Theo has interviewed one of the most influential editors in Fleet Street, and has been asked to send MSS. to his paper; Madge has sent in her two show-pictures to the Slade School, and is to begin regular work there at the half term. Meantime she is studying the different Exhibitions and Collections, and, as she says, picking up 'quite valuable hints' from old masters! She is so amusing! She comes home every evening with absurd accounts of her adventures. Most people would find it rather dull to spend a whole day at the National Gallery, for instance, but Madge has the faculty of finding amusement wherever she goes, and, even apart from the pictures, has a dozen little histories and romances to recount!"

"Y-es!" assented Avice flatly. She herself had little sense of humour, and was by no means prepossessed with the plain, elf-like figure of her youngest cousin. Hope, on the contrary, was graceful and charming, and had been already mentally adopted as the friend of the future. "What are *you* doing?" she asked with interest which could not fail to be flattering, and Hope moved her chair a trifle closer with an impulse of girlish confidence.

"Oh—I am getting on so well! I have had my first lesson in harmony, and my master is so kind and interested. He seems to think that I know a great deal already, and his work is so interesting. In the mornings I study and practise, and in the afternoons I try to hear as much music as I can. I go to cheap seats at concerts and recitals, or to service at the Abbey or St. Paul's. And fancy! I have had a commission to write a song for a professional—a real professional! A lady who sings at concerts all over the country. You may know her name—Miss Minnie Caldecott!"

Yes! Avice knew it quite well, and was duly impressed by the news. She passed it on to her mother, who was sitting silently criticising the details of the room, while her husband talked to the older girls. She also appeared impressed, and expressed a desire to hear Hope perform one of her own compositions. Accordingly the piano was opened, and the girl sang, not one song, but two, that her relations might duly appreciate the variety of her style. First the graceful and would-be classical setting to the words, which Miss Minnie had despised, and then the more taking, if less high-class "domestic" ditty. Mrs. Loftus had little of the maternal instinct in her composition, but even her hard face softened as Hope's fresh voice sang the sweet simple words. "Bravo! Bravo!" cried Uncle Loftus loudly. Avice opened wide surprised eyes, and Mrs. Loftus put up her eyeglasses and examined the singer in critical fashion. So young, so pretty, so exceptionally gifted! Really, the girl would be a useful addition to an evening's entertainment, or a house party in the country. She made a mental note that Hope was the "presentable" member of the family, then she rose to take her departure, murmuring society nothings, as she shook hands with Philippa, and checking Avice's farewell words with a warning frown.

"Oh, yes; we must arrange to meet again.

"'THE HERMIT! DO YOU SUPPOSE HE HEARD?'"—(*p.* 648.)

I will look over our list. Don't make any plans to-day, dear. You are so over-done with engagements."

She rustled to the door, followed by her obedient spouse, who, allowed no time to speak, delivered himself instead of a succession of mysterious nods and smiles, which left the girls in a state of amused mystification. The explanation was, however, speedily forthcoming, for ten minutes had not elapsed after the departure of the three before a second bell sounded, and there stood Mr. Loftus again, erect and self-confident, a man on his own account, with no overwhelming feminine element to keep him in the background.

"Back again like a bad penny!" he cried, jocosely. "Just a word to say to you, my dears—a word in your ears. Put the ladies into the carriage, and went on 'to my club.' He, he! Useful things, clubs! About that boy, now. Don't approve of your spending capital—never approved of that, you know, but pleased to help you all the same. Edgar's children. Yes! Ought to give you a lift. Fifteen, eh? Young to leave school, but can't be helped, I suppose. Was speaking to Spence the other day—most influential man—thinks he might take him in there. Eh? Yes. Insurance office. Huge place—hundreds of clerks. Spence is manager. Always taking in new fellows. What do you think of that, eh?"

"Please sit down, uncle," said Philippa, greatly puzzled by the short, jerky sentences; and so far as she could judge of the proposal, thinking about as badly of it as it was possible to do. "It is very kind of you to remember Barney, and we are most anxious to find him an opening; but I don't know that Insurance—and such a number of clerks, too! Would not a boy be likely to be lost among them, and drudge on, year after year, without promotion?"

"In an ordinary way, yes; but this would be different. I'm on the Board, you see—on the Board—Chairman last year. Spence a personal friend. Help him on, if he stuck to his work. Don't know the boy, but if Spence took a fancy to him, there isn't a man in town who has more in his power. Peculiar man, Spence! Difficult temper—autocratic; but if he takes a fancy, there's nothing he won't do. Barney, now: what kind of a boy is Barney?"

"All kinds!" replied Philippa, smiling. She felt perfectly satisfied that Mr. Spence *would* take a fancy to Barney, but whether that young gentleman would "stick" to his work was another and a very different question.

"He is a very handsome boy, Uncle Loftus, and full of fun and mischief. He is clever, but I'm afraid not too industrious. We hope that he will settle down and realise that he has his way to make; but he is young, as you say. Mr. Spence might not have patience with him."

"Oh, Spence would have nothing to do with him at first. He would have to obey the head of his department. Send Stephen to me to talk it over. Men understand business; girls, you know—pretty girls like you—think only of bonnets. That's it, Hope, isn't it? Becoming new bonnets. Quite right, too. Get a becoming one, my dear, then come and see me in it when it is bought. Now I must be off! Glad to have seen you all. Pretty little nest at the top of the tree. Hope it may be prophetic, I'm sure. Hard on my legs, though. Stiff in the knee. Not as young as I was, my dears—not so young as I was!"

He went toddling out of the door, smiling and chuckling to himself, and as he descended the staircase the echo of disjointed phrases reached the girls' ears. "Top of the tree! Ha, ha! Not so young as I was. Prophetic, eh? Hope it is prophetic!"

"Poor little mannikin!" said Philippa, pitifully. "I feel like a mother to him. He daren't be kind in his wife's presence, he is so kept down. How I do detest to see women snub their husbands and fathers! When I marry I intend to look up to my husband, and think him the finest man in the world. I'd rather be ruled by someone stronger and wiser than myself, than have it all my own way. *My* husband is going to be master of his own house, or I'll know the reason why!"

She was leaning over the banisters as she spoke, listening to the departing footsteps of the "mannikin" as he trotted along the stone entrance hall; but as she finished speaking, she drew back with a gasp of dismay, for a cadaverous countenance was raised to hers from the landing immediately beneath, and the tenant who had objected to Hope's practising stood for a moment buttoning his coat, then slowly took his way downstairs. With one bound, as it seemed, the girls were back in their own sitting-room, confronting each other with horrified scarlet faces.

"The Hermit!"

"The author-creature, who writes all day, and sits up all night. Do you suppose he HEARD?"

"Heard! My dear, he has ears; how could he help it! If you *will* air your ideas as to your future husband on the landing of public buildings, what can you expect, Philippa? Never

mind! Perhaps it's just as well that you should understand each other from the first."

"Don't be vulgar, Madge. That kind of joke is in the worst possible taste."

"'Pologise! My vulgar nature, I suppose. *Didn't* he stare? He looks shockingly ill. I should say his nerves were over-strained, and he wouldn't be too pleasant a companion. I hope he won't call!"

"People never call in London, child, unless they have some sort of introduction, or a mutual friend. Besides, the porter told me the Hermit is quite a celebrity. So why should he call upon us? He writes articles for the reviews, and long, learned books which no one can understand. I will never try to, for one. . . . I hope I may never, never see his face again!" cried Philippa, in a sudden outburst of passion, for it was really most trying to discover a strange man playing the part of audience on the one occasion on which she had "let herself go."

Stephen called upon Mr. Loftus as suggested, was taken to interview the eccentric Mr. Spence, and eventually decided to accept the offered opening for Barney. It was not exactly the position which he would have chosen, but beggars cannot be choosers, and his uncle's influence, backed by a personal introduction to the manager, seemed to hold out a reasonable chance of promotion. At the worst, the experience would give the boy some knowledge of office life, and prevent his running wild over London, getting into fresh mischief with every hour as his custom was.

The half term arrived and with it Mr. Barnard himself. The lad drove up in a hansom, and smiled patronisingly upon the sisters assembled to welcome him in the bare entrance hall. He was nearly as tall as Philippa herself, and very like her in appearance, though his sparkling face lacked as yet her characteristic strength and earnestness of expression. So far, indeed, life had appeared one huge joke to Barney, and his radiant spirits had suffered no eclipse. He allowed himself to be kissed and hugged by one sister after another, and was then escorted up the stone staircase with all the honours of a returned hero, the while his bright eyes roved from side to side in search of adventure. He tested the banister, calculated its length from top to bottom, and offered to race Madge down with a handicap of half a minute. He pointed to the bottles of fire extinguishers ranged on each landing, and cried genially: "We'll start an alarm of fire one night, and watch the Johnnies rush out and smash 'em!" Seeing the words "Do not knock unless absolutely necessary" printed on a card nailed on the Hermit's door, he lingered behind to give such a resounding rat-tat-tat to the knocker as woke the echoes to life. The girls scuttled upstairs like so many frightened mice, but what was the good of that? They could not hide the noise of their footsteps, and once in the precincts of their own flat they one and all fell upon Barney, covering him with reproaches. How could he? How dared he? It was so rude, ungentlemanly, unfair to his sisters! He must never, no, never do such a thing again!

"Well—scarcely ever!" cried the beaming culprit. "So this is the rabbit warren, is it? What a rummy little show! When will the feed be ready? I'm dying of hunger? Hope you've slain a jolly big calf while you were about it!"

When the "calf" appeared, and the re-united family seated themselves round the dining-room table, Barney wished to bet someone "a tanner" that without leaving his chair he could ring the bell, poke the fire, pull up the blind, and put a plate on the sideboard, and proceeding to give practical illustration of his words, overbalanced himself, grazed his head against a corner of the bookcase, and made an ugly stain upon the wallpaper with the contents of his overturned plate.

"Really Barney—really! That's not at all amusing. I don't feel in the *least* inclined to laugh!" protested Philippa, severely, but she belied the truth of her words by smiling lovingly on the culprit throughout the meal. It was easy to see who was going to be master of *that* flat!

(*To be continued.*)

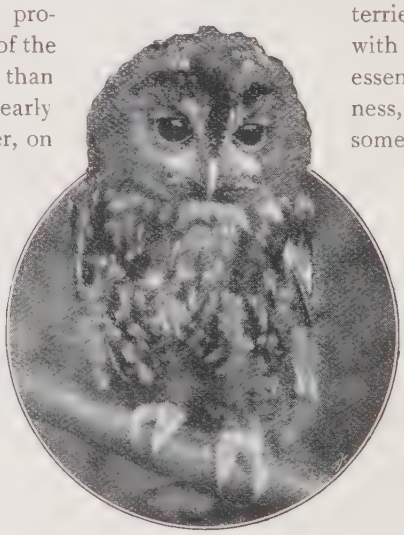
Animal Photography

By Maude Craigie Halkett.

Illustrated from Photographs by the Author.

In all branches of photography patience is an important factor in the road to success, but in animal photography its importance becomes paramount.

Although I am by no means one of those egoistical amateurs who consider their work superior to professionals, I do say that I have often seen an animal study produced by a mere tyro in the art of the camera that is infinitely better than many by professionals. In nearly all cases of failure by the latter, on inquiry, we are told that "Messrs. So-and-So were very busy the day I took Fluffy to be photographed, and she was so tiresome, at last they had to take her anyhow!" The result is technically all that could be desired in a photograph, but a sad failure from an artistic point of view.



"OF OLD SAT WISDOM ON THE HEIGHTS."

Turning to another photograph of the same subject we find it is a living picture of the cat in its most pleasing attitude, but perhaps badly executed from want of technical knowledge, and we are told that "Ted" or "Jack," the photographer of the family, was so wonderfully patient and painstaking, he used such a quantity of plates, and followed the animal about quietly and cautiously for several days before he got the desired effect.

Dogs are, as a rule, the best sitters. You can generally attract their attention and hold them in a particular position for say, a second, while you make the exposure. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. The wire-haired terrier in the picture, who, sitting with his paws crossed, looks the essence of amiability and steadiness, was one of the most tiresome subjects I ever had to deal with. He seemed absolutely terrified of the camera, refused to lie still an instant, and wandered about the lawn where I was photographing him, in a most unhappy way. At last it occurred to me that if I unscrewed my camera, put it on the grass, and focussed an object at a particular spot, I might perhaps beguile him to the right place, and by a quick exposure secure the desired photograph.

When all was ready I asked his mistress to sit down at one side of the place I had marked out. Then with a lump of sugar she induced him to come to her. When he was on the marked spot she gave him the sugar, upon

receipt of which he lay down, crossed his paws in a favourite attitude of his, ate the sugar, and without moving his body raised his head as much as to say "I'll have some more." The fortieth of a second's exposure caught him, and I secured the very picture I had been vainly striving to obtain all the afternoon.

"THREE BULL PUPS IN THE CASE."

Kittens are generally very troublesome, though not so difficult as cats. These latter are nearly always overcome by an excessive drowsiness when brought near the camera, and lie down in attitudes in which it is impossible for the photographer to obtain any light or shade, or to throw up any particular feature.

Kittens one can deal with by means of some simple toy. A reel of cotton, a piece of string, in fact, almost anything that one can move will attract and hold a kitten's attention. But the danger is that the attraction may become too great, and that the kitten may spring out of range in pursuit of the fascinating toy.

The four Persian kittens belonging to Lady Decies, which form one of the illustrations to this article, were placed on a cushion against a nearly white wall. They were held there while I arranged the focus and saw that everything was in readiness for an instantaneous exposure. The movement caused by Lady Decies drawing to one side rather quickly made the leaves of a creeper rustle, which attracted the little creatures' attention, and caused them to look in that direction. With an exposure of the thirtieth part of a second I got the picture that you see.

Donkeys are as a rule quiet and fairly easy to photograph. They delight in standing still, and by making a violent noise one can get them to cock their ears forward, which gives them an alert expression without their moving

"ARE YOU THERE?"

Persian Kittens, the property of Lady Decies, are interested in the movements of their Mistress

sufficiently to bring them out of focus. A little corn will make them wear quite an excited look, but even that will not do more than cause them to take a step or two forward, and the tempting grain can be held at a proper point to suit the position of the camera.

Poultry or birds of any kind are difficult subjects. I have found the best plan with them is to get far enough away and use a stop small enough to allow a certain margin for movement nearer or farther from the camera—say F. 16, or in very bright weather F. 32—with an exposure of a fortieth of a second and a quick plate. Warwick's Instantaneous or Ilford Special Rapid are the kinds I usually employ.

A QUIET STEED.
Miss Halbert considers donkeys excellent models.

Warwick Instantaneous allow what I might call a wide latitude. That is to say, good negatives can generally be obtained even if the exposure has been rather under or over the proper time, provided the development is carefully carried out. I do not hold a brief for either of these two firms, but only mention theirs as the plates I have tested myself by long experience. One thing I am quite certain of is, that having found a plate that suits your particular style of work, whatever it is, it is best to keep to that plate. There is nothing like close acquaintance with a plate to ensure success in photography generally. One learns the special developer it needs, and its weak and good points. It is a good thing, as a rule, to conform to the directions given by the makers on the label of the box in which the plates are packed. I must confess, however, as regards the Warwick Plates, I generally use the Paget formula, which I gave in my article on "Photography for Girls," in the June (1901) number of THE GIRL'S REALM. I find it a good all-round developer, easily manipulated, clean to work with, and suiting nearly all makes of plates.

Sometimes the operator is burdened with too much friendliness on the part of the animals to be photographed. When I was photographing some little Shetland ponies they were so tame that while I was arranging my camera I found them in a crowd all round me, wanting to be petted.

It is essential when a figure is introduced into a purely animal picture that the person should not appear conscious that he or she is being photographed. On the other hand you will find people who will not efface themselves: a coachman, who cannot conceive how the photograph of the horse can be more interesting without his figure in a prominent position. This happened when I was taking a photograph of a Shetland pony belonging to Lady Estella Hope. It was in vain that she and I suggested that the groom should stand a little further from the pony. He would move in obedience to our suggestion, but in another moment edge nearer the animal's head, with the result that it was very difficult for me to realise where the pony's head began and where the man's clothes. In this photograph I had to resort to what is commonly called "faking." I took a soft-pointed camel's hair brush, a pot of photophake (an opaque red paint), and very neatly and carefully painted round the figure of the pony, and took out some of the grass on which he was standing, till I had completely blocked out the man, the sky, in fact, everything excepting the pony and a small piece of ground. I then toned and fixed a print

from this negative. It was a queer looking photo, with so much blank white.

When it was mounted and dry I again took the brush. This time I rubbed down some good Indian ink on my palette, mixed with a little colourless gum and water, and when I had got what I thought was the right tint I sketched in grass up to where the original grass had been, and painted in some rough rather light cloud effects. I then re-photographed the picture. It was quite wonderful how little the painted-in background showed. Indeed, no one would have ever guessed that there had been a figure of a man in the picture at all. I may here mention that I would not recommend this to be done frequently. It is much more troublesome than it sounds, and unless one has a little smattering of drawing and painting is an impossibility.

An instantaneous shutter is as necessary as patience when one wants to do any subject that is likely to move. Of these shutters there are a great variety, and makers issue them at prices to suit every purse, be it a long or a short one. There is the kind that only costs a few shillings, and there are others that cost several pounds. Most dealers will supply a very good one at a reasonable price. Personally I use a Thornton-Pickard shutter, which I find very reliable. There are three kinds made by this firm: Instantaneous only, which is the cheapest; time and instantaneous, with a speed indicator, a little more expensive; and lastly, what is called a focal plane shutter, most costly of the three.

"ISN'T THIS A DAINTY DISH TO SET BEFORE A KING?"

Now, unless you want to photograph a horse at full gallop, or a railway train travelling at eighty miles an hour, for which a focal plane would be necessary, a time and instantaneous shutter is quite fast enough for most purposes, and it is a useful kind for all-round work. With it one can vary the exposure from the fifteenth part of a second to the ninetieth of a second for very rapid work. Then by an ingenious arrangement the shutter can be set to give an exposure of seconds, minutes, or hours if necessary. The shutters for instantaneous

THE WIRE-HAIRED TERRIER SITS FOR HIS PORTRAIT.

work only are cheaper, of course, than those that will give time exposures, too; but the extra shillings are well laid out on the time and instantaneous shutter, as one can regulate the speed to suit all conditions of work and light.

I do not by any means advocate always working at a high speed. On the contrary I prefer to give a time exposure whenever I can, and only resort to extreme measures in extreme cases, when it is impossible to induce the subject to be still.

When taking an object quickly, be sure you have a good light. For an ordinary amateur to try to take an instantaneous picture on a dull day means certain failure, as in this case the development has to be very carefully carried out, and probably would be of such long duration, that the operator would lose patience, and with that the plate.

"COMRADES-IN-ARMS."

An exposure meter is a great help towards ascertaining the strength of the light, as sometimes in bright sunshine the atmosphere may be full of small particles which will detract from the value of the light. After rain as a rule the air is wonderfully clear, and very short exposures can be given successfully. I myself use a Wynne's meter of the watch pattern, and I find it gives very correct speed estimates. The names of most brands of plates are given on a card which is issued with the meter, and their approximate speed indicated.

Another important thing to remember is the choice of backgrounds. When it is possible, as in photographing domestic animals, a plain background is desirable. A useful background can be made by nailing a piece of sacking about two yards wide on a rough blind roller, which can be purchased for a few pence from the local carpenter. It comes out a nondescript colour, provided it is placed far enough behind the object of the photograph to avoid the grain of the canvas being too sharply defined. The canvas can also be painted over with a pale grey oil paint, which makes an admirable background for cats. The natural colour I find most suitable for dogs. By putting it on rollers (one at each end) it can easily be rolled up to prevent ugly creases and stowed away. The background should be fitted with two strong rings, one at each end of the top bar. Then a suitable place should be found outside, say, on the house or garden wall, where a good light is obtainable, and where two strong hooks may be inserted without damage or unsightly appearance. It is then easy to hang up the background when it is required, its own weight keeping it quite straight and flat.

The length of the canvas must be determined by the owner, but about three yards and a half is a very useful size, as it will serve equally for animal and figure studies.

Nothing makes such a bad background as ivy, and this on account of its exceedingly shiny leaves. The gloss of the leaves attracts the sun, with the result that a mass of splotchy-looking white lights appear where they are not wanted, thus completely spoiling what otherwise might have been a charming picture. As a general rule any kind of leafy background is a mistake unless the trees form part of the composition of the picture. Even then, they ought not to be too prominent, or they will detract from the main object.

Horses and ponies generally look best and stand better when they are photographed in or near their own stable yard amid familiar surroundings. Care, however, should be taken not to get ugly lines too near the animal.

Before I leave what is to me a most fascinat-

ing branch of photography, I should like to say a word about development. Be very careful not to be too impatient in the dark room, and see that that room is *really dark*. Make certain that your red lamp is safe, for by using faster plates you increase the danger of fog by any stray actinic light. To insure that all is light-tight, after making everything ready, take a rapid quarter plate, lay it on the table or sink in the vicinity of the ruby lamp, and leave it there some minutes exposed to its rays. Then place it in the developing dish and develop like an ordinary plate. If it develops clean and white all is well, but if, on the contrary, dark streaks or universal fog appear, discard your chimney or lamp glass with all speed and buy another.

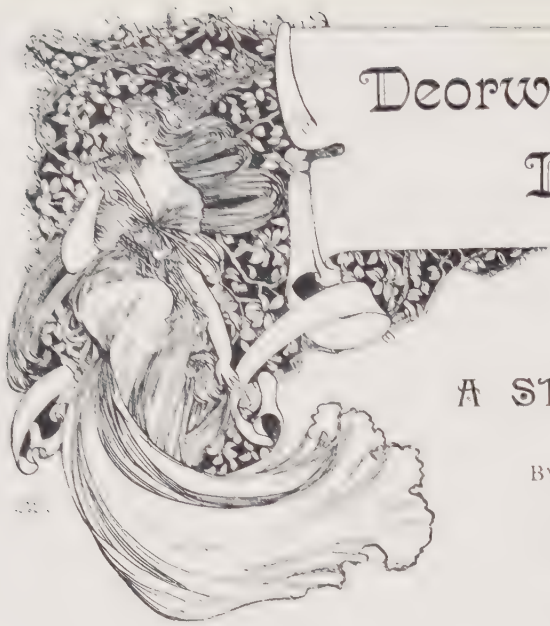
In cases of known under-exposure more of No. 2 developer should be used, and a little water may be added with advantage. In developing the photograph of a white animal, the normal developer should be diluted with water, say equal quantities of each. Development will be somewhat slower, but it will make an enormous difference in the printing quality of the finished negative, for instead of a soot and whitewash print, the lights and shades are clear and soft, and a much more pleasing result is obtained.

Be sure the dark room is kept tidy. It is a great help when one knows exactly where to find a particular bottle or dish. Cleanliness is also absolutely essential to good photography. It is well to make a practice of at once thoroughly rinsing out any dishes or graduates that have been in use, as, if they are left standing with chemicals in them for long, they are more difficult to clean.

If any readers of THE GIRL'S REALM are encouraged to take up this branch of photography after perusing my article, I am quite sure they will find its study and practice most interesting. Extra trouble incurred in learning to understand the models will be well repaid by the charming results obtained, and the pleasure that can be given to relations and friends by photographing some favourite pet for them.

Photo by Frank H. Read.

FLOW'RY SPRING.



Deorwyne's Inspiration.

A STORY OF SPRING-TIME.

BY M. H. CORNWALL LEGH.

Illustrated by MALCOLM PATTERSON.

I.

WHEN you know that her name was Deorwyne you will guess that she was no common girl. You are right; she was a poetess.

From her early childhood Deorwyne Walsham had been full of romantic, beautiful ideas, and now she was seventeen these ideas were beginning to take form in poems, which, if they were not quite so marvellously lovely as she herself and her sister Nelly thought them, were at least full of promise and considerably above the average of those of a girl fresh out of the schoolroom.

These twin sisters were as great a contrast as can well be imagined. Deorwyne was a tall, graceful, willowy girl, with large dark eyes and a pale complexion—exactly what one would expect of a poetess and a Deorwyne. Nelly was a round-faced, fair-haired, sweet-tempered little thing, who would no more have thought herself capable of writing a line of poetry than of making a battle-ship, but she was Deorwyne's most appreciated critic, because the most appreciative. She caught her sister's underlying thoughts and recognised her finest passages better than many much cleverer people did, and she even had a way of making suggestions which materially improved the poems.

So, when Deorwyne said to her one lovely Saturday afternoon last May,

"I have finished my new poem, Nelly. You must come with me to Brookside Coppice and I will read it to you," there was nothing for Nelly to do but to lay aside the blouse which needed but one hour's more work to have it ready for Sunday, and put on her hat and go. Deorwyne did not like her to sew while she was being read to; it was destructive to artistic perception to have one's eyes fixed on an ever-flying needle.

Nelly would have liked to finish her work and to have something fresh and cool to put on this warm May weather, and next week came the spring cleaning when she would not have five minutes to sit down and do anything for herself, but mundane considerations, such as new clothes, were not to be thought of when Deorwyne wanted to read her a poem.

The sisters set off then together across the fields, over which a warm wind blew, full of the petals of May-blossoms and the sweetness of fresh-budding things, intangible but delicious.

"Nature is breathing hard," said Deorwyne, "in her struggle to get herself into her brave attire before summer appears to woo her."

"How lovely to have poetical thoughts about everything, as you have, Deorie!" Nelly responded, putting her arm through her sister's and squeezing it. "I am so horribly prosaic. I was just thinking about curtains, whether we

couldn't get some new ones for mother's room, and do it up fresh for her as a surprise when she comes back! The old chintz things are so faded."

"Don't let's think about those wretched household affairs to-day, Nelly, when the hedges are white with hawthorn and the birds are singing 'Come and be one of us!'"

"Be two of us." Deorwyne would have said, only that would have spoilt the poetical sound of the sentence. Why? she wondered, thinking the matter over, and so relapsing into silence.

They followed the path through the first field, which was of sprouting wheat, into another, a mass of buttercups, so bright a yellow that they were almost dazzling. Nelly could not pass them by, they looked so gay and joyful. The brass pot in her father's study, too, wanted replenishing, and nothing looked so well in that as yellow flowers. So she gathered a handful, then, running hard, caught Deorwyne up at the gate which led out to the field.

Deorwyne always walked in a leisurely way, especially when she was thinking.

They came to the lane overhung with oak trees, so lazy that they had only just woke up and were putting forth little rosy fingers to feel if the air was warm enough for the leaves and blossoms to come out: so Deorwyne said.

"Only the little red buds *are* the leaves, aren't they?" suggested Nelly.

"You mustn't strain a metaphor," answered Deorwyne, and Nelly accepted the correction humbly.

At length they reached the Coppice, through which a narrow cart-track led to the neighbouring village of Hedgefield. Grassy footpaths diverged from this main track, and into the first of these the sisters were turning when Nelly exclaimed, "Look there!"

Nailed to an oak-trunk was the notice

TRESPASSERS WILL BE PROSECUTED.

They had never seen it before.

"That must be the new man who has taken Grange Manor," she went on, glancing between the tree-trunks at a large, old-fashioned house just visible on the other side of a broad dell. "I heard that he wasn't going to let the Coppice be open to the public any longer. Isn't it a shame?"

"Horrid, selfish man!" Deorwyne responded with unusual vigour, "to shut out the poor from the simple joys which should be the heritage of all!"

"We aren't exactly the poor; we have our own little bit of wood; but I feel very angry with him all the same," responded Nelly.

"Our wood is no good for me," Deorwyne replied; "it is so small and so near everybody. I never can get any inspiration there."

"Well then, let us trespass!" said Nelly, briskly, "and see what happens! I always love to do wicked things, you know. And when one's grown up it's so hard to find anything wicked to do that isn't really wrong."

Accordingly the two sinners wended their way down the sun-flecked path into the fastnesses of the wood. A rabbit scudded across their path, twinkling his little white tail, and the bluebells looked up invitingly between the blades of young grass.

"I think the bluebell is your flower, Deorie," Nelly said, picking one of the tall, graceful sprays.

"And the buttercup yours," answered Deorwyne.

"That's a good idea. There are such heaps of them, and they will grow anywhere. So will daisies, but I couldn't be a daisy; that's much too poetical a flower, and the hymn says it's so full of virtues. I'm sure I'm a buttercup!"

When they had trespassed a quarter of a mile or so into the wood, the sisters found a spreading elm tree whose shelter afforded a suitable place for the reading of the poem, and they seated themselves on its protruding roots.

Then Deorwyne began to read and Nelly to listen.

"I have the best of it," thought Nelly; for while her ears were listening to the beautiful creation of her sister's brain, her eyes could wander to the still more beautiful creations about her, the sky, so deep a blue against the bright white clouds that crept across it, the

speedwell looking up at it and reflecting both the blue and white, the tall trees and young bushes in their first freshness of delicate greenery, the bracken fronds uncurling slowly before the radiance of the May sun.

"Are you listening?" said Deorwyne, glancing up and observing Nelly's wandering eyes.

"Oh, yes, I'm taking it all in together, but I won't look about, if you'd rather I didn't."

And thenceforward she fixed her eyes on her sister's face, only detaching them now and then for an instant to gaze up into the sky.

That was how it was that this generally wide-awake young person observed no more than the poet someone approaching by a pathway at their backs. Indeed, it was not till he stood in front of them, saying, in a stern voice,

"I beg your pardon for interrupting you, but we don't allow people in these woods!" that either of the trespassers was aware they were discovered.

Then both jumped to their feet with an air of conscious guilt that caused the young man —he was young, and a good-looking young man moreover—an effort to keep his countenance and preserve the severity of his tone as he added,

"I suppose you did not see the notice about trespassers at the entrance to the Coppice?"

The sheets of Deorwyne's manuscript lay scattered about at her feet. She clutched them hastily together, blushing crimson, and stammering apologies, while Nelly felt an almost irresistible impulse to laugh. Deorwyne looked so terribly ashamed of herself, and moreover so lovely, with that blush on her usually pale cheeks, and the young man was so evidently struck thereby—the while he could not resist the temptation of frightening her and extracting more pretty apologies from her! It was such a romantic little episode, as well as so comic, that Nelly felt much less sorry than a wrong-doer ought to have done.

Deorwyne, however, was so genuinely embarrassed and distressed over it, that Nelly had to speak for them both.

"I am very sorry if we have done any harm to the wood by walking in it," she said. "We did see the notice about trespassers, but people have always been allowed in the Coppice, and we did not see why there should be any difference."

She did not speak defiantly, but a mischievous twinkle could not be kept out of her eyes.

"I am *so* sorry," said Deorwyne in a different tone, one of true penitence, glancing up shyly at the stranger, and then letting her eyes drop, while she blushed again.

"Please don't be disturbed about it," answered Mr. Castleton; "of course you have done no harm. We have to keep out the public, as I mean to preserve these coverts; besides, some of those men out of Greathampton have been digging up ferns and primrose roots, which must be put a stop to. But pray sit down again, and . . ."—with a twinkle in his eye—"finish your reading. I am afraid I overheard a few words as I came up, and. . . ."

The words with which he wanted to complete his remark were, as Nelly and Deorwyne herself guessed, "I should very much like to hear the rest of it," but he was too much of a gentleman to utter them, and he contented himself with begging the girls to remain where they were, explaining to them that it was a different class of people whom he wished to exclude from the wood. Some people have a succinct way of explaining things. Mr. Castleton had not. It took him at least ten minutes to say everything he had to say, to make matters clear. When he had at last done so, he took out his card and gave it to the girls, saying that he hoped they would walk in the Coppice as much as they pleased, only avoiding certain parts where the keepers had placed young pheasants, and adding that should anyone attempt to warn them off they had simply to show this passport.

Then he left them, but the poem was not finished that afternoon. The girls had too much to talk about.

"This is the beginning of your own poem, Deorie, I'm sure of it!" Nelly said. "What a nice beginning, just like your ballad about Elsie of the Mill!"

II.

THE house-cleaning was in progress, a process in which all three of the daughters had to assist, servant-power being limited at the Vicarage. It was a dusty, stuffy affair for this glorious May season.

"Why can't we all live in tents through the summer?" Deorwyne sighed, finding the moral atmosphere even more uncongenial than the material one, when the annual turning-out was in progress.

"You would have to dig a hole in the earth for the winter, too, to avoid a house-cleaning," said Mary, the eldest sister. "You had better see if you can't find a commodious old rabbit-warren in the Coppice to hold us all, like the one in which the family made their home in that very probable story of yours."

"Which Deorie wrote when she was just nine!" put in Nelly, who was always indignant at Mary's want of appreciation of their poetical sister's genius.

"Would you think me very horrid if I went off to the woods?" Deorwyne asked. She always left her battles to be fought by Nelly. "I'm afraid it seems like trying to shirk work, but I have an idea for a poem that has just come into my mind, and if one does not catch the inspiration when it is on one, it is gone, and never comes back again."

Mary demurred. Deorwyne had promised to wash the china, and everyone else had her own task to accomplish. But Nelly came to the rescue.

"Of course Deorie must develop her idea before she loses it. I shall have plenty of time for the china myself after I have done the floors."

"Dear Nelly!" Deorwyne kissed her. "But it seems so selfish of me!"

"Selfish? No! I would much rather have a poem to listen to to-morrow than have you sacrifice yourself and your 'inspiration' for the sake of housemaid's work."

So Deorwyne went off with her MS. book and her fountain pen, and a packet of sandwiches with which Nelly ran after her, in case she did not feel in the mood for coming back to luncheon. If she did come back, Nelly had reflected, she would probably be late, for Deorwyne, in her poetical moods, had little regard for time, and that would vex Mary, who was punctuality itself, and always in rather a strained condition of nerves at the time of house-cleaning.

About twelve o'clock there was a knock at the front door, and, since Jane was scrubbing upstairs, Nelly went herself to open it. She had on an old skirt and a washed-out print

"THE TRESPASSERS JUMPED TO THEIR FEET WITH AN AIR OF CONSCIOUS GUILT."—(*p.* 658.)

shirt, and her fingers were brown, for she was in the middle of staining a floor. It was not the costume she would have chosen for the occasion of receiving a visitor of distinction, but there stood Mr. Castleton at the door!

Again Nelly felt an overwhelming inclination to laugh. She did so, as she made her apologies.

"It is I who ought to apologise," he answered, "for making such an untimely call. I thought, being such a fine day, your sister might like to go to the Coppice, and I wanted to let her know that the young pheasants have been moved, so that the part near the birch plantation is free, if she cares to sit there. I should be sorry to think I had frightened you away for good and all."

If he had only come half an hour ago!

Nelly did not exactly put that into words. She did, however, say that Deorwyne had gone off for a country ramble, hoping that as he went back, good luck would bring their paths to cross. But Mr. Castleton did not leave at once.

"As I am here, may I pay my respects to Mr. Walsham?"

"My father will be delighted to see you, if he is in," Nelly replied. "Do you mind waiting here?" as she brought him into the hall. "The drawing-room is all topsy-turvy."

In a few minutes she returned.

"Father is just finishing his sermon. He will not be five minutes, if you do not mind waiting."

Mr. Castleton, of course, said that he did not.

"You are all very busy," he remarked. "I suppose your sister does not go in for this sort of thing?"

"I should not let her do what I am doing," said Nelly. "She isn't strong enough."

"Is she delicate?"

"Not exactly delicate, but when a person's mind is very much developed, don't you think the body is always a little sacrificed to it?" Nelly asked.

"It seems something must be sacrificed," responded Mr. Castleton.

"Deorwyne always thinks she is too delicate to do anything she doesn't want to do," laughed Mary.

"Of course there's no reason Deorie should be set to work at messy, tiring things that anyone can do," Nelly said with an indignant glance at her sister. "Especially when there are common girls enough in a family, who are no good at poetry and intellectual things."

"Are you common girls? You ought to label yourselves as such, otherwise people don't know what to expect of you. I imagined you were a poet too."

Nelly laughed. "I a poet! Once, a good many years ago, Deorwyne asked me for a rhyme for rose, and I suggested 'nose.'"

"Well. Why shouldn't a nose be as poetical as any other feature? When I write a poem it won't be about 'deep melancholy eyes,' but about a 'sweet tip-tilted nose'!"

"Tip-tilted! What a lovely name for Nelly's pug!" exclaimed Jacky, the youngest of the family, who had been set to dust books, an occupation which allowed much distraction of thought.

"You must get Deorwyne to give you a lesson on the principles of poetry," Nelly broke in, with her usual laugh. Her cheeks were too rosy from her exertions to show any added colour.

"Nothing I should like better," Mr. Castleton answered: "except to have a lesson in house-cleaning from you."

Very properly, he included Mary in his glance, but his eyes went first and last to Nelly.

"That would be more useful to me as a bachelor," he added. "I am sure my housekeeper doesn't do all this." The girls replied only with a laugh. But Mr. Castleton was in earnest.

"I am not too delicate to make myself useful," he said. And two minutes later he had pulled off his jacket and tucked up his sleeves and was varnishing in the track where Nelly stained. Presently he found that the varnishing was the lighter work, and then he insisted on their changing occupations.

Mr. Walsham's sermon took a great deal longer than five minutes to finish. He had a way of letting his thoughts run away with him and becoming oblivious of the flight of time.

It was just lunch time when he pushed aside his chair, after writing the last sentence of his discourse, and came out into the hall full of apologies to his long-detained visitor.

"You must stay and lunch with us," he said. And Nelly joined in the invitation, in the hope that Deorwyne might thus come home before he left.

Mr. Castleton did stay to luncheon and for a long time afterwards, making himself very useful and keeping the girls and Jacky in peals of laughter over his quaint comments, questions and suggestions. But still Deorwyne did not come. Finally he took his leave, saying that he should expect a long bill for the whole course of lessons he had been given in one day.

"It was all because of those unlucky sandwiches," Nelly said, sighing, as she watched him disappear down the drive. "If I had had a notion he was coming I would have told Deorie she must be in to lunch."

III.

WHEN Deorwyne came home again and found what had occurred in her absence, she was as nearly cross as a poetess can be. She had not got through more than a few verses of the new poem, for which the idea had so untimely seized her, having stuck at the third rhyme she wanted for 'love.' 'Dove' and 'above' she had already used, and the only other word that had come into her mind was 'shove,' which she feared had a touch of bathos in it.

"The tender leaves their branches out do shove."

Would that do? She had wished she had Nelly there to give an opinion. Browning was in the habit of using rhymes just as quaint, but Deorwyne reflected, rather resentfully, that the reading world would endure things from him which it would not from her. When Deorwyne met with a difficulty, it always set her lingering and dreaming. When Nelly came to

"TWO MINUTES LATER MR. CASTLETON HAD PULLED OFF HIS JACKET, AND WAS VARNISHING IN THE TRACK WHERE NELLY STAINED."—(*p.* 660.)

one, it was her way to look it full in the face and grapple with it before she did anything else, but, as she said, her difficulties were all commonplace ones, and not difficulties like Deorie's.

To-day the path of poetic composition being obstructed by this scarcity of appropriate rhymes, Deorwyne seated herself beneath an elm-tree in a little wood, not far distant from the Vicarage, and thought and dreamed, without writing another line of "The Canticle of Spring and Love" till she grew so hungry she had to eat her sandwiches, seasoned with sorrel leaves, which she could pick as she ate. So tired did she find herself afterwards that she leant back against the tree-trunk and, lulled by the humming of the bees and singing of nightingales, fell into a gentle sleep.

"And when I woke up," she said in giving her account to her sister afterwards, "there were a lot of tiresome children come to pick bluebells. They would not go away, and I could not induce them even to go to another part of the wood or stop chattering."

"And all the time I was wanting you so much to come back!" said Nelly regretfully. "He waited and waited for you. I know it was that he stayed for. I did so hope you would come in before he left. However, I don't think this is the last time he will call."

IV.

IT was not. Mr. Castleton came twelve times again, and on the twelfth he asked to see Mr. Walsham alone in his study. The interview was a short one, and when it was over the Vicar came to the door and called,

"Nelly!"

The twin sisters heard him open the door and with excited eyes and trembling lips squeezed each other's hands.

"Nelly!"

"He means Deorie, of course," Nelly said. "Father often calls us by the wrong names."

Deorwyne rose to her feet with heart beating fast and rose-red cheeks.

"Nelly!" A third time. "Nelly!"

"Go into the study, dear. Mr. Castleton has something to say to you," the Vicar whispered in an agitated voice. He stooped to kiss his daughter as she went.

"What a funny way of doing it!" Nelly laughed to herself. "Mr. Castleton must be shy, if he has to speak to two people about it before he ventures to offer himself to her."

But Hugh Castleton was a much odder man than Nelly had ever imagined, for it wasn't whether Deorwyne cared for him he wanted to ask. Not at all!

"You . . . you can't mean *me!*" Nelly gasped, when Hugh had said what he had to say.

But he did mean her, and though she was very, very sorry about Deorie, positively penitent, in fact, and almost in tears, when Hugh asked, "Do you think you ever could learn to care for me, just a little?" what could she answer but the truth?

A SONG OF SPRING-TIME.

WARBLING, warbling, in the green woods see
Merry little songsters wild and free.
Flitting and winging from tree to tree,
Trilling and singing in full-toned glee—
For you and me on every tree,
Birdies are piping a gladsome glee.

Piping, piping, hear the pipers sing,
Woodland life is a glorious thing;
Winter is past, and away we fling
Memories dark of the snow-clad king:
Happy are we when welcoming Spring,
When elves and fairies dance in ring.

Tinkling, tinkling, hark the fairy bells,
Mystic music stealing thro' the dells—
Soft winds wafting o'er the breezy fells—
Waken, waken, the sweet chorus swells:
Green are the copses bidding gay farewells
To sunless days and winter spells.

Singing, singing, who so blithe and gay?—
We too, birdies, we will fling away
Care to the winds, singing while we may,
Life is happy on a bright Spring day.
To you and me the carollers say,
Life is happy on a bright Spring day.

ALICE A. MILNER.

THE PRINCESS OF WALES ORCHID.
Remarkable for its beauty of form and colouring.

PECULIAR AND MYSTERIOUS FLOWERS.

A Visit to Mr. Sander's Nursery at St. Albans.

By H. L. ADAM.

Illustrated from special photographs by CAMPBELL *and* GRAY.

To the student of botany and floriculture the glass-houses of Mr. Sander, the famous orchid-grower at St. Albans, are replete with fascinating interest. There are between four and five acres of these houses, crowded with plants from all parts of the earth. The visitor to them passes from one atmosphere to another, from one perfume to another, amidst a veritable kaleidoscope of colours. The rainbow possesses no hue that cannot be found here. In fancy the enthusiast is transported to distant climes where the strange, the quaint, the beautiful in plant life flourish in ample and luxuriant freedom.

I travelled one day to St. Albans, there to hear a number of wonder-stories about plants from the lips of Mr. Sander.

I asked him if there was such a thing as a black rose. He replied that, strictly speaking, there was not. Efforts have been made to produce one, but without success. A very dark specimen has been raised, but it cannot yet be said to be of a perfect black hue. There is, Mr. Sander told me, a green dahlia, but the black rose has yet to be produced.

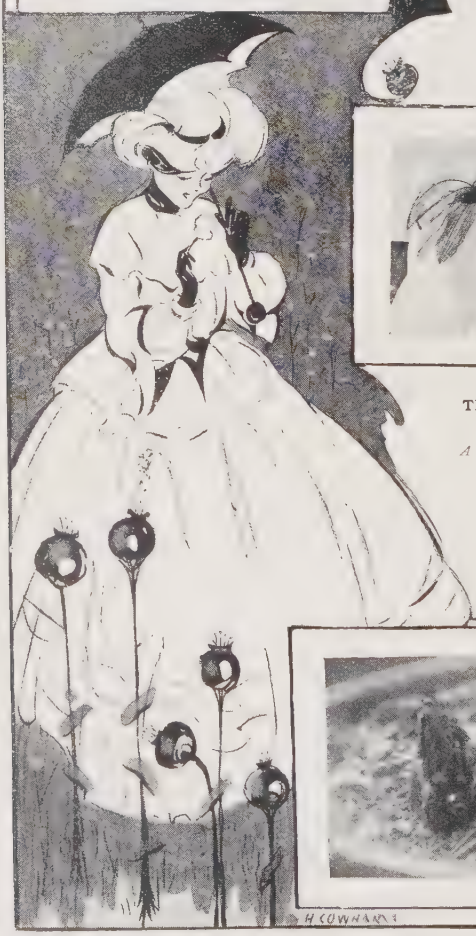
The hybridising house through which we went contains many interesting curiosities. There are plants here which give the visitor valuable lessons in patience. One from the Congo States refuses for some inexplicable reason to blossom. For six to seven years this plant has been carefully tended and encouraged, but yet it will not condescend to flower. When it does—if it ever does—there will be

THE "NODDING ORCHID,"
Reverenced as a superstition by the natives of West Africa.

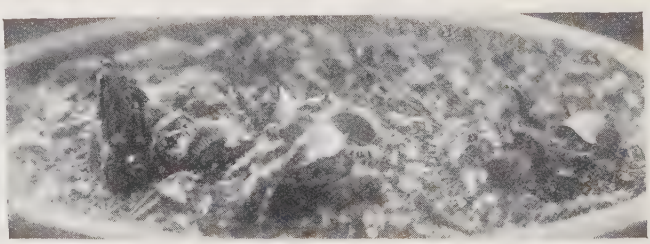
Another curious plant is "The Freak." That, I need hardly explain, is not its botanical cognomen. But I do not mean in this article to trouble you with long Latin names. The blossom known as "The Freak" consists of a large scarlet leaf, in the centre of which is a yellow "spike." The great effort of its tenders is to induce the spike of the flower to recline gracefully over the leaf. This is not easy, and may take twenty years to achieve. Mr. Sander showed me a blossom he had been experimenting with for nine or ten years, but he was not sanguine that with it he would achieve the desired success.

THE "FREAK."
A scarlet and yellow blossom on which the cultivator has been experimenting for ten years.

THE "WINDOW PLANT."
A native of Madagascar.



THE "RAT-TRAP" INSECT-EATING PLANT.



great rejoicing in Mr. Sander's flower-colony, and the first bud will be looked upon in the light of an infant phenomenon.

During my walk through this flower-colony, I was shown a wonderful variety of orchids. There was one—a native of West Africa—

which possesses the unenviable appellation of the "Centipede." It grows on a kind of lattice-work, and all along both sides of the stem are shoots, or tendrils, which look very like legs, hence its title. I looked in vain for the root, and to my surprise I learnt that the leg-like appendages are the root, and that the plant obtains its nourishment from the air!

Another species of orchid produced what seemed to be bananas. This turned out to be the Vanilla Orchid, and the fruit the beans, from which, when they are ripe and dry, vanilla flavouring is extracted.

To my mind the most interesting of all the orchids I was shown was that called "The Darwin." This orchid was named after the famous theorist on account of the interest he took in it, and the theory which he propounded in connection therewith, a theory that has never been proved to be correct or demonstrated as incorrect.

The plant was discovered in the remote regions of Madagascar, and is peculiar in construction. It has a showy blossom, funnel-shape at the top and tapering off to a very thin, hollow spike, about eleven inches long. The blossom altogether measures thirteen or fourteen inches. Plants, of course, are fertilised by birds or insects, which, in an endeavour to obtain access to some attractive substance, disturb the pollen. At the end of the long spike of "The Darwin," right at the bottom of it, is a deposit of a sticky substance, which would attract insects. To obtain it, and at the same time fertilise the plant, it would be necessary for the insect to enter at the top and by some means reach down to the bottom of the spike. This being so, Darwin argued that there was in existence an insect which was possessed of a proboscis as long, at least, as the spike. If the substance was got at by penetrating the outer case the process of fertilisation would not take place. It remains for somebody to discover this insect; it is probably a very retiring, very modest little creature, seeking seclusion in some quiet corner.

The "Princess of Wales" orchid is imported from Colombia, and is remarkable for its wealth of beauty and delicate colouring. It is not an expensive flower and is very popular. It has a perfume, sweet, but not too obtrusive. And in this respect it is a curious fact that the strongest-smelling orchids are the most insignificant in appearance. Many of the most beautiful blossoms have no perfume at all. There is a spot on the river Orinoco where orchids grow in abundance, but which explorers are unable to penetrate on account of the overpowering odour which the plants send out.

A native of the West Coast of Africa is the "Nodding Orchid." It has a very small, frail-looking blossom, that works on a kind of hinge. A faint breeze will cause the flower to nod up and down in the quaintest possible manner. It is regarded with superstition by the natives of the West Coast, and is in consequence very difficult to procure.

A curious plant, popularly known as the "Window Plant," comes from Madagascar, the leaves of which, although green, are mere skeletons. The plant is found in slow-running streams, and is very difficult to rear. When plants are imported from distant lands and introduced into the nursery, their natural habits must be indulged, and their native atmosphere imitated as near as possible. The "Window Plant," for instance, is kept in slow-running water, while orchids are reared in a hot and humid atmosphere because they thrive most in tropical swamps and marshes.

Let us now turn to the insect-eating plants. From South Carolina comes what is known as the "Rat-trap" plant. It is a small plant, and consists of two green petals hinged together at the side, and fringed with a double row of spikes, or teeth, after the fashion of the implement for snaring rats, which gives rise to its name. On the inside of the petals are several small, stiff hairs, projecting at right angles to the petal, which is smeared with a sticky substance—the "bait." The fly in search of delicacies—only small insects of course can be captured—is lured into the trap by the presence of the sticky substance, but no sooner has he touched one of the stiff hairs than the petals spring together, and the victim is secure within the shambles. Then a curious process ensues; all the nutriment from the fly's body

THE "FLY-CATCHER."

The fly is caught on the surface of the leaf of the plant shown above, and held.

A RARE PALM.

Of which there are only two or three in the world. They fetch from £50 to £100.

THE "VANILLA" ORCHID.

From the beans of this plant vanilla flavouring is extracted.

THE "MONKEY CUP" OR "HALF-WAY HOUSE" PLANT

A jug-shaped blossom that fills with water, which men and insects drink.

out, leaving a place for fresh victims.

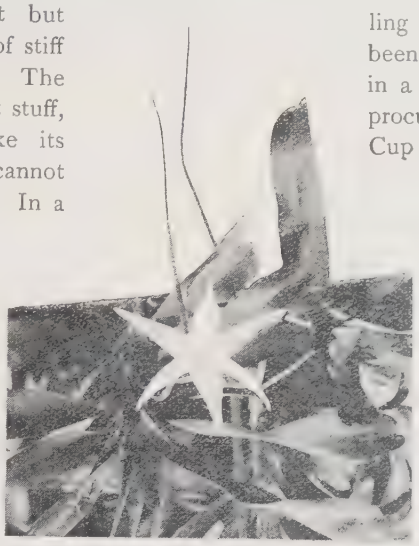
There is a plant of similar habits, but much larger. In this instance, the fly is caught on the surface of the leaf, which is covered with a kind of stiff mucilage, such as one sees on a fly-paper. The fly is caught and held, the very substance that holds it performing the process of extracting the juices from its body.

Another fly-eating plant is called the "Trumpet," or "Side-saddle," and is found in the swamps of Florida. Its second name is derived from the fact that the top of its blossom is fashioned after the style of a lady's saddle. The

is extracted to contribute to the nourishment of the plant. This being accomplished, the petals open and the carcass of the insect falls

stem is long, and funnel-shaped, which suggested its first title. It is very large, and bluebottles are among its many victims. On the tip of the blossom is a deposit of a delectable bait—sweet but fatal. There are also a lot of stiff hairs pointing downwards. The fly enters, feeds on the sweet stuff, and then prepares to make its exit. But in vain, for it cannot get past the opposing hairs. In a panic, the insect turns about and makes its way downwards with the hopes of finding an opening at the other end. Fatal supposition! At the bottom is a solution ready to receive the fly and to digest it.

Mr. Sander plucked a blossom and slit it up with his penknife. At the bottom he showed me quite a dozen fly carcasses.



THE DARWIN ORCHID.
Named after the famous theorist on account of the interest he took in it.

The "Monkey Cup" from the East Indies, next claims our attention. It has also been called the "Half-way House." It is a large, hollow, jug-shaped blossom, which becomes filled with water. It is found in remote parts, and monkeys, birds, beetles, etc., drink the water from the cups. Men travelling a long distance have also been glad to quench their thirst in a similar manner. The water procured from the "Monkey Cup" is believed to contain valuable digestive properties.

There is a plant at the St. Albans Nurseries, the only one of its kind in the place, which is a complete mystery to its cultivator. It has the appearance of a lot of tangled string, and boasts no name. The only thing that is known about it is that it comes from America, though from what particular part there is no evidence to show. The plant is pathetically referred to in the nurseries as the "Poor Little Orphan."

THE "UNKNOWN PLANT."
A complete mystery to its cultivator.

The "Gigantic Birthwort" is another curiosity. It has the appearance of an enormous vegetable marrow with a long tail-like appendage. It measures four feet long, and eighteen to twenty-four broad. It opens and shuts, and when open it throws off a very powerful odour, which attracts a certain kind of fly.

In these houses of Mr. Sander's there is abundant evidence of the boundless resources of Nature, the skilful ordering of things, the never-ending surprises, the beauty of form and colour, the variety of perfumes that exist within the kingdom of Flower-Land.

CHIMP.

THE STORY OF A PICTURE.

By NORAH DREW.

Illustrated by E. Florence Mason.

I.

Chimp was a hunchback. Those who were in the habit of frequenting the High Street, knew him well by sight, for he swept a crossing there, and had done so for years. Certain kind-hearted old gentlemen, and young ones too, gave him pennies pretty regularly as they passed on their way to business, for there was something in the pathetic face that attracted. It often had a hungry look on it, too, not hungry for food—Chimp never wanted for that—but hungry for love and care. He was an orphan without a single relative that he knew of. Chimp's life was mostly an out-door life, but there was a place he called "home," poor lad—a little garret near the sky.

Chimp had his thoughts, and was busy with them in the evenings until he fell asleep, and then he was busy with his dreams.

He fell to dreaming in the daytime as well, and his dream was of a Saint. It came about in this way. There was an art shop just round the corner near his crossing, and in this Chimp took the keenest interest. Now and then during the day, when business seemed slack, he would treat himself to a good look in at the window, where pictures of every sort, in beautiful frames, were to be seen, and it was one of the excitements of Chimp's life when a change took place among those pictures; old ones would disappear, new ones would come, and never an alteration escaped him, however trivial it might be. One day he saw something in that window which made his heart beat fast.

It was the picture of a face, the face of a girl, with hair falling about her shoulders, and a wistful, far-away look in her soft eyes. Chimp could not have expressed his thoughts in words, they only took shape in one little sentence which he repeated softly to himself over and over again: "Don't her be lovely?" It seemed to him to be the face of a Saint, and from that moment he never thought of it as anything else. He hobbled home to his poor garret with a feeling of great gladness, as of one who had made a friend.

The owner of the art shop had always inspired Chimp with a feeling of awe, when he stood in the door taking a survey of the street. But now this new interest had made him bold, and with his Saint so near, he could face even the gentleman in the frock coat.

So it was that he suddenly presented himself one day before the hitherto unapproachable art dealer, and, jerking his thumb towards the window, asked with surprising abruptness:

"Be her a Saint?"

The man was startled at being addressed in such an unceremonious fashion, but he answered kindly:

"Very possibly."

The boy gave a nod of satisfaction, as though he would say, "I knew it." Then he went away without saying another word.

A longing desire had taken hold of Chimp, and it held him in such a grip that he could think of nothing else; it was a desire to possess the picture for his own. True, there was one great obstacle in the way, the want of money wherewith to buy it, but this did not trouble

him much. He would pinch and save in every possible way, go without the boots he had promised himself that winter, half-starve if needs be, so long as he could have his Saint.

To find out the price of the picture necessitated another interview with the art dealer, and this time Chimp ventured inside the shop in his eagerness.

"How much be her?" he asked, again indicating to what he referred by a jerk of the thumb.

"That carbon print, do you mean?" said the man. "One guinea, frame and all." Chimp was satisfied, for the price did not seem out of his reach if he were willing to wait awhile—some months, perhaps—and he had two shillings already towards the boots.

"If the weather's only bad this winter," he said to himself, "I'll 'av good luck."

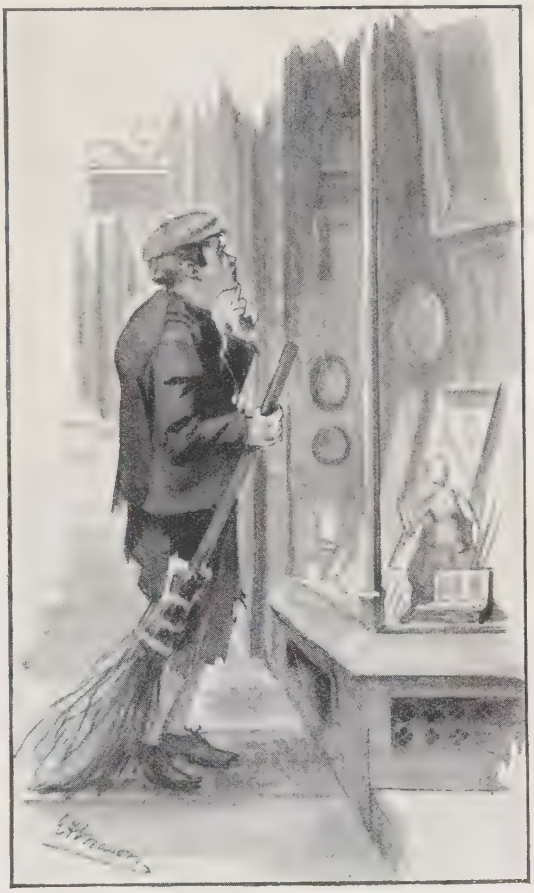
* * * * * *

Before another month had passed, the winter came in real earnest; it was one of the good old-fashioned winters, with plenty of snow and hard frosts. Chimp was busy earning his extra pennies, so busy that he did not seem to notice the cough that began to trouble him every day because his boots had large holes in them, which let in the cold and the wet. He was happy in his mind, for he had five shillings saved in the tea-pot at home, and each evening some coppers were added. Chimp did not know that the accomplishment of his dearest wish was so near at hand. One morning, as he pushed aside the snow, his broom struck something hard. Chimp dived his hand down into the snow to see what the object was.

"Why," said he, holding it in his hand, "if this ar'n't a purse what's been snowed upon. 'Ere's a find! And my! if there ar'n't two bits of gold inside and some silver!"

He was too breathless with astonishment and joy to say any more. His thoughts were centred on the picture in the art shop window. It should be his that very day, he determined; he would carry it home under cover of the darkness when evening came on, and the presence of that Saint-like face in his poor room would make it for ever a bright and happy place.

Then he set to work with speed and energy to tidy up the crossing, that he might the sooner hurry round the corner just to have a look at his new possession, for he felt that already he could claim it as his own. Yet it seemed to him that as he gazed into the face of his Saint, she looked sadly and reproachfully at him, and he fancied he heard her saying: "Chimp, be you a-going to spend that money what is not yours? Don't go for to do that, it arn't right; take



"ONE DAY CHIMP SAW SOMETHING IN THAT WINDOW WHICH MADE HIS HEART BEAT FAST."—(*p.* 668.)

it to the Police Station, Chimp, that's the honestest thing to do."

The little fellow turned away with a pitiful sigh. "Her couldn't be in the house with a chap what wasn't honest," he muttered, and without another moment's consideration, he made his way to the Police Station and delivered up the purse. The man to whom he gave it took his name and address.

"You did quite right to bring it here," he said, "and something may come of it."

They were cheery words, and cheerily spoken, but all the same, something very like a sob mingled with Chimp's cough, as he dragged himself back to the crossing.

Two days passed, and then a great event took place. A visitor appeared in the little garret. It was evening time, when the day's work was done, that he came, and he was a tall gentleman with a kind face.

"So you are the lad," he began, "who found my patient's purse. The old lady was so pleased with your honesty that she wished to give you a reward, and I volunteered to bring it." He paused and eyed Chimp critically. "You look as if a little money would not come amiss," he went on. "Should you find a difficulty in spending ten shillings, eh? But listen to me, lad, take my advice and buy yourself some warm vests and a pair of boots. I shall come and see you again in a few days and will bring something for that cough of yours. I am a doctor, you know, and want to make you well."

He was gone before the words of thanks could find their way out of Chimp's lips, and had it not been for the half-sovereign which lay in his open hand, the boy might have thought he had seen a vision or dreamed a dream. It was some minutes before he took it all in, and then there spread over the poor pinched face a smile of intense pleasure. Vests and boots did the gentleman advise him to buy? Not he, not if he knew it; every farthing of that money was already spent in thought. Six shillings in the pot—for it had swelled to that—ten shillings in his hand, only five more to get.

The next day he went to pay his usual visit to the art shop window, but when he reached it the smile that had hovered on his lips since the evening before, suddenly gave place to a look of anguish, and he uttered a cry of pain. His Saint was gone. For one moment he stood trembling on the pavement, and then half-rushed, half-tumbled into the shop.

"O sir, be her sold?" he cried in a heart-broken voice.

"Who do you mean, poor fellow?"

"My Saint," gasped Chimp, and then the man remembered.

"Ah, I know," he said, "the carbon print. No, she is not sold, I've changed her place, that's all. She is inside the shop now instead of in the window."

This announcement was such a relief to Chimp that he at once became confiding and talkative.

"Look you, I've been an' collected for to buy her," he said, "an' there aren't more nor five bob to make it h'up. I've 'ad a bit of h'extra luck, see, and got a 'arf-sovereign quite sudden like, t'other six bob I saved. Will you keep her for me till I gets the rest, and indeed, sir, I'll be as quick as I can?"

The art dealer looked very astonished.

"Tell me why you want this picture so much?" he asked.

But Chimp was a person of few words.

"Her be so lovely," was all the answer he gave.

The art dealer looked at him closely. Then he said, "You can take that picture away with you to-day; it shall be yours from this moment, and you can bring me two shillings more as you earn it. We won't say anything about the other three. No, never mind the thanks; I see you are grateful. Come in on your way home this evening, and the parcel shall be ready."

Chimp's eyes filled, and his lips trembled so that he found it hard to speak his gratitude or express his pleasure.

When he went in the evening to fetch the picture, his new friend put a hand kindly on his shoulder, the poor crooked shoulder, and said,

"Go home to bed, my boy, and stay there to-morrow, you don't look fit to be about."

Chimp went home to bed.

Oh, that happy night! when the last thing he saw, before the light flickered out, was the face of his Saint looking down on him from the garret wall.

II.

"OH, come up if you *please*, sir, but bless you, he don't know no one."

Chimp's landlady prided herself on knowing how to address gentlefolk when she came across them, for once she had been a nursery-maid in

a gentleman's family. That was long ago, and she was a grandmother now. Still she remembered.

"Mind your head agin the door," she continued, as they reached the top stair. "Now hearken at him, sir, he've been a-muttering like anything about Saints and such like, all the blessed day. I've give him till to-morrow to get over it, and then fetch the doctor, I will, if he ain't better."

"*I* am a doctor, my good woman, I will see what can be done for the little fellow."

"He comed home last night," went on the landlady, pointing to the picture on the wall, "with that there under his arm, but however he got it, passes my understanding; it do seem to me to be very out of place here."

The doctor bent over Chimp.

"There is not much I can do," he said, turning to the landlady, "but I shall send something that may soothe him. His lungs must have been bad for a long time, and now, with pneumonia on the top, there is little chance for him. What was that you were saying about the picture?"

"Why, it do fret me rather to think of it," she answered, "and he was alway honest, too, always. Still, it ain't likely that a poor chap like him would have such a thing give him, nor yet the money for to buy it, so I can't think how he comed by it."

"I comed by it quite lawful, Mrs. Chulk."

The voice from the bed startled the little woman.

"Why! if he ain't hisself again!" she exclaimed, then going nearer to the sick lad, "Yes, Chimp, I knowed you must have comed by it lawful."

"Her be a Saint," murmured Chimp, "and her be dead, like all Saints; it do be a pity, but her be dead."

"Listen here," said Mrs. Chulk, thinking he was wandering again, "there's a gentleman come to see you, the same what called the day afore yesterday."

Chimp smiled faintly on the doctor.

"You know, sir, as I comed by her lawful, for you gived me the ten bob yourself, and I'd saved some in that there teapot for to buy her."

"Yes, yes," said the doctor, "and she is very pretty, very sweet; it makes you feel better to look at her, doesn't it?"

"That it do," Chimp answered, "and 'er 'av 'elped me often to be gooder; her couldn't smile, you see, sir, on a chap what wasn't honest. I would like to 'ear her voice just once, that I would, but her be dead."

The doctor looked closely at the picture to see the name of the artist, and thought to himself as he did so.

"If she is as good as she looks, she will come, I am sure she will come"; and he left the garret promising to be back again that evening. There was a kind purpose in his mind as he hurried through the streets. He remembered having once met the artist who had painted the picture of that Saint-like face, and it was to him he was now going, to ask

"'BE HER A SAINT?' CHIMP ASKED, WITH ABRUPTNESS."—(*p.* 668.)

who the model was that he had drawn from. He found him in his studio, and was received cordially.

He glanced round the room and caught sight at once of the same beautiful face that adorned the walls of Chimp's garret. It was just such another carbon print, but in a handsomer frame, and it rested upon an easel.

"I have come about that picture," he began, without delay. "May I ask a question or two? Who was your model, and where is she to be found?"

"The answer is simple," said the artist. "The model was my daughter, and she is to be found in this house at the present moment."

"That *is* a relief," the doctor replied, and he then proceeded to tell his errand, ending up by saying:

"Anyone with a face like that must be used to doing kindnesses, and if she is as good as she is beautiful she will come."

"Yes, she will come; we will come together, now—immediately."

"That is indeed kind, but it is dark and getting late—I hardly like—and yet, if we say to-morrow, well, it may be too late to-morrow."

"We must go now," said the artist, and went to tell Chimp's Saint that Chimp wanted her.

A few minutes later the three were in a cab on their way to the poor garret.

"The room will scarcely hold three," said the doctor, "and besides, I think that it is better for the sick lad not to have more people about him than necessary. Will you allow your daughter to come up with me alone?"

They encountered Mrs. Chulk on the doorstep, and she greeted the doctor thus:

"He's lost hisself again, and got the idea in his 'ead that his Saint is angry with him because he 'aven't give quite all the money for the picture—why, bless me! if this young lady ain't the very same as that there upstairs."

The doctor and the young girl went upstairs without waiting. They found the hunchback, moving restlessly on his mattress, moaning

"Her won't smile at me; her thinks I aren't honest, but indeed I'll earn the two bob soon, and he said he'd trust me."

The doctor put his hand on the fevered forehead, and spoke very gently.

"Chimp, my poor fellow, your Saint is not angry, see, she is smiling at you, look at her, she wants to speak to you."

"Yes, Chimp," said a softer voice, "I am here, don't you see me?"

But Chimp did not seem to see; he looked beyond the figure standing at his side, and his eyes wandered round the room, seeking the picture on the wall. He still moaned on,

"Her won't smile at me, her thinks I aren't honest."

"'WHY,' SAID CHIMP, 'IF THIS AR'N'T A PURSE WHAT'S BEEN SNOWED UPON!'"—(*p.* 669.)

"Oh! what can I do to make him see and understand," the girl asked, her eyes filling with tears.

"I would stand in front of the picture, just where his gaze is fixed," the doctor answered, "and might I suggest something? The hair in the picture is hanging over the shoulders."

"To be sure, so it is," she said, "it was painted last year, when I was younger, but it can easily come down again," and she took off her hat and let the pretty brown hair fall loose about her; then, standing exactly before the picture, she spoke again to the dying lad.

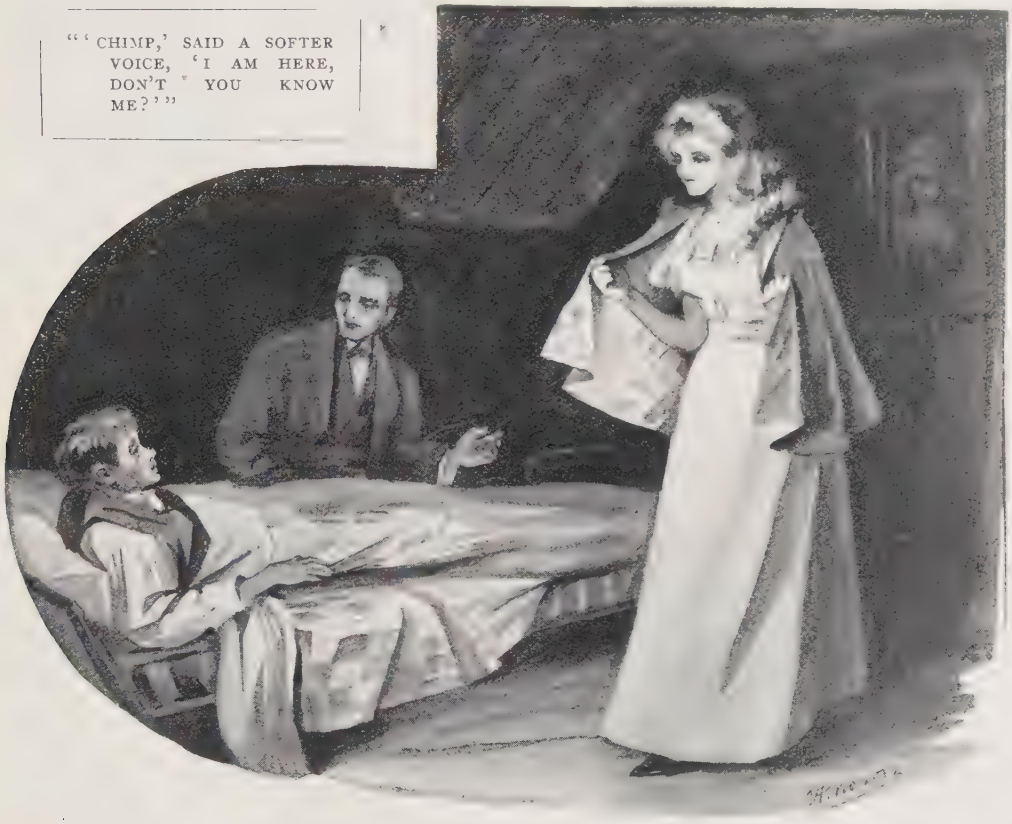
"Chimp, I am so glad to see you—see, I am smiling at you, for I know you are quite honest and I am not angry with you."

And then, at length, the anxious, unhappy look faded away from the poor pinched face,

"No, Chimp, I am not dead."

"And her 'av come to see me, my Saint 'av spoke to me."

He felt so satisfied that he closed his eyes upon the lovely vision and gave one little sigh.



"'CHIMP,' SAID A SOFTER VOICE, 'I AM HERE, DON'T YOU KNOW ME?'"

and it lighted up with a smile that was radiant in its beauty.

"Then her aren't dead after all," he whispered.

"We will come away now," said the doctor and when they joined the artist at the bottom of the ricketty staircase, "it would have been too late to-morrow," he said.

MY OWN SWEETHEART.

TO ELLA, *ætat* 7.

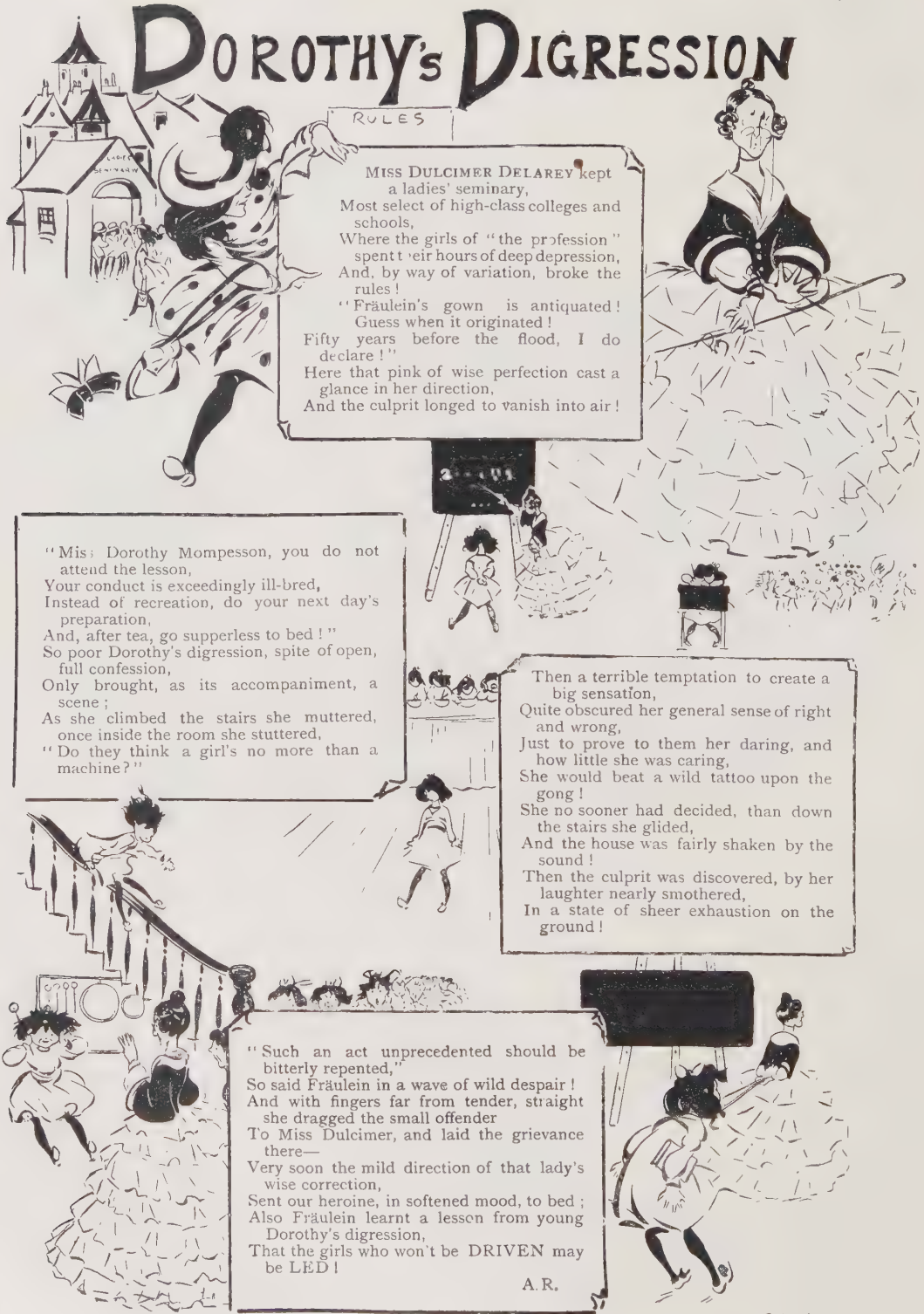
THO' you and I are years apart
I claim you, dear, as my sweetheart,
But you are only seven you see,
Whilst I, alas! am forty-three.

Tho' in life's race I've such a start,
And in your life can hold no part,
Your love heals many an ache and smart,
Tho' I am old and forty-three,
My own sweetheart.

And so, my dear, child tho' thou art,
Grant me a corner of your heart
Where I may sometimes be,
For you are all the world to me,
Tho' you and I are years apart,
My own sweetheart.

ROSLYN GREY.

Dorothy's Digression



Miss Dulcimer Delarey kept
a ladies' seminary,
Most select of high-class colleges and
schools,
Where the girls of "the profession"
spent t eir hours of deep depression,
And, by way of variation, broke the
rules!
"Fräulein's gown is antiquated!
Guess when it originated!
Fifty years before the flood, I do
declare!"
Here that pink of wise perfection cast a
glance in her direction,
And the culprit longed to vanish into air!

"Mis: Dorothy Mompesson, you do not
attend the lesson,
Your conduct is exceedingly ill-bred,
Instead of recreation, do your next day's
preparation,
And, after tea, go supperless to bed!"
So poor Dorothy's digression, spite of open,
full confession,
Only brought, as its accompaniment, a
scene;
As she climbed the stairs she muttered,
once inside the room she stuttered,
"Do they think a girl's no more than a
machine?"

Then a terrible temptation to create a
big sensation,
Quite obscured her general sense of right
and wrong,
Just to prove to them her daring, and
how little she was caring,
She would beat a wild tattoo upon the
gong!
She no sooner had decided, than down
the stairs she glided,
And the house was fairly shaken by the
sound!
Then the culprit was discovered, by her
laughter nearly smothered,
In a state of sheer exhaustion on the
ground!

"Such an act unprecedented should be
bitterly repented,"
So said Fräulein in a wave of wild despair!
And with fingers far from tender, straight
she dragged the small offender
To Miss Dulcimer, and laid the grievance
there—
Very soon the mild direction of that lady's
wise correction,
Sent our heroine, in softened mood, to bed;
Also Fräulein learnt a lesson from young
Dorothy's digression,
That the girls who won't be DRIVEN may
be LED!

A.R.

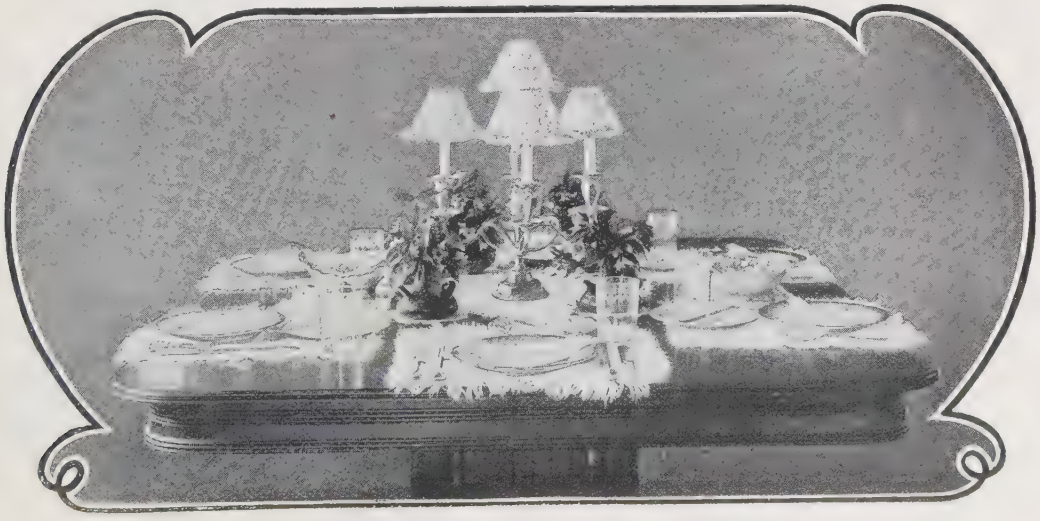
TABLE LAID WITH EMBROIDERED CENTRE AND ROSES.

Novelties in Luncheon Parties.

By BARBARA D. FOORD.

Daintiness and simplicity are the chief features of the mid-day meal, and with a little skill and taste one can work wonders with a handful of flowers, pretty dishes and fine linen. In the summer, when the importance of the dinner declines somewhat, the luncheon calls for larger consideration. In the country, indeed, it becomes the chief meal for the entertainment of friends. In this article some suggestions are offered for imparting a spice of novelty to a meal which deserves, perhaps, more attention than it has been customary to give it.

To begin with a few ordinary hints: an important point to be remembered is to keep one's table appointments as nearly as possible in harmony with the floral decoration. If our flowers are pink, give preference to the china decorated in that colour, and choose a centrepiece that corresponds. A round mahogany table was most successfully arranged with a lace cover only half covering the top, plate doilies to match at each place, a small centrepiece of the same lace placed over pink satin upon which stood a cut-glass bowl filled with pink roses. If we have but few roses, two,



A TABLE LAID FOR A GREEN AND PINK LUNCHEON.

A TABLE LAID FOR A MARINE LUNCHEON.

Marine in all its appointments and decoration, even to the dainty ocean shells which serve as plates. A compliment paid by a hostess to a boating or yachting party.

They, too, look exceedingly well in narrow-necked vases, but four rather than two should be used. Chains of smilax can transform an ordinary table into a bower of green, either twisted about the base of the bowl or vases of maidenhair or used alone stretched from end to end of the table in the form of a Maltese cross, with all the table ornaments placed between its arms. The smilax may be tied together in the centre with a great bow of the colour desired, but it is certainly daintier without.

or at most three are placed in slender vases at two corners of the table and the effect is even daintier than with the cluster. Carnations are used in the same way, as well as sweet peas, and all these flowers are most desirable in nosegays for each guest, placed in the napkin. If you want flowers for individual bouquets, and have not enough for that and the table too, tie up the flowers in the number of bunches required, bank them all together in the centre of the table, and at the close of the luncheon, ask each guest to help herself. Still another way to arrange roses, is to place them singly all over the centre of the table, as if carelessly flung there, and carry out the illusion by spreading about a few petals.

The green table is, perhaps, most attractively decorated in maidenhair ferns. Use a larger cloth for this, showing only corners of the table; fill a jardinière with damp sand or earth, and stick in the ferns.

It is one of the fancies this season to follow out the colour scheme, even in the viands served. Here is a pink luncheon with a vengeance:—Grape fruit, with a pink doily of crinkled paper on each plate; cream of tomato soup; lobster à la Neuburg or salmon; chicken fricassé, fried potatoes, peas; salad. We must stop and study the salad. The whole skinned tomato, hollowed out to give material for the soup, is placed on a plate amid picked lettuce leaves. It is filled with celery and sour apple cut fine, the apple,

A JAPANESE LUNCHEON TABLE.

The shrimp salad and boiled rice are eaten with chop-sticks, the guest cards are gorgeous with Japanese pictures and characters.

say, in slices the thickness of a halfpenny and half its girth. This is mixed with mayonnaise, a spoonful, coloured pink by the juice of beets cooked in vinegar, is placed on top. The pink mayonnaise, the red tomato and the yellow lettuce leaves makes a most attractive dish for the eye as well as one most acceptable to the palate. This is followed by pink ice-cream, with the pink cakes and sweets, which have helped decorate our table, accompanying it.

Some of our best ideas are shown in the illustrations, where they, to some extent, explain themselves. The first table shown is pretty and simple, and could be used quite as well for dinner. The table is covered with a damask cloth clearing the floor nine inches. Down the centre, marking the plate line, is laid a table-centre, embroidered in rose design. Each course includes a service plate holding a serviette, knives for the roast and fish, soup-spoon, name-card and water-glass; forks for the roast, fish, salad and strawberries. Vases, holding two or three roses each, are disposed in and out along the sides of the centre. The candlesticks being added, the same arrangement of the table could be used for dinner.

The second illustration is a table laid for Green and Pink Luncheon. Service plates which hold fringed serviettes, bread-and-butter plates holding butter spreader, water-glasses, and knives and forks for the first two courses, are laid on six linen serviettes. The silver for each of the other courses is laid in place before the serving of the course. A serviette is placed in the centre of the table for the candelabra. Pink flowers with foliage, in four green vases, rest on round doilies outlining a square about the candelabra, which are often used on the luncheon table for effect, especially in America, where the importance of luncheon is very great. The Pink Luncheon already described might be served with effect on this table.

A Marine Luncheon might be made a great compliment if one were entertaining a boating or yachting party. There is a novel interest in a table decorated like the one shown in this picture, which is distinctively marine in all its appointments and decorations, even to the dainty shells from the ocean which serve as plates. The mirror in the centre makes what seems to be a miniature lake, and the use of a fish-net as a tablecloth is a unique and happy idea.

A CUPID LUNCHEON PARTY.

A table arranged for the entertainment of three newly-engaged young couples.

The table shown in one picture is Japanese in all its appointments. The shrimp salad and boiled rice were eaten with chopsticks, and the guest-cards were gorgeous with Japanese pictures and characters. Even the candlesticks were finely modelled Japanese storks—birds that are regarded with reverence in the Flowery Kingdom. So much has been written about the Japanese of late, and so many pretty articles from Japan are obtainable in English shops at a moderate price, that girls need have no difficulty in elaborating the ideas shown in our photograph.

Our last illustration is of a Cupid Luncheon. This table was prepared for the entertainment of three young couples who had all just come under the sway of Cupid. Hearts entered into every detail, in fact, were almost the exclusive decoration.

Won on the Playing Fields:

The Story of some School and College Challenge Trophies.

By KATHLEEN WALDRON.

THE SILVER LAWN TENNIS CHALLENGE TROPHY OF "MAYFIELD," OLD SOUTHGATE.

This Trophy was won outright by Mabel Black, whose portrait is given [illegible]

FROM time immemorial challenge trophies have been rigidly distinguished from personal rewards, and have been found to benefit the pastimes for which they were instituted. Besides the encouragement of keenness for the sake of the club, or team, challenge trophies have a great historical value. Often when paper records have long since been lost or destroyed, records on challenge cups can fill an important gap in the history of a game.

And in connection with every pastime there is always an interesting history which widens the merely personal interest, and well repays some attention.

Trophies serve to hand down the athletic history of a school or college in a more certain way than the usual mouth to mouth fashion of tradition.

But however desirable such trophies may be, it is not every school that has a right setting for them. There must be some sort of connection between schools or colleges for the foundation of an inter-collegiate or an inter-school challenge event to be interesting. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of our well-known schools and colleges have no big challenge trophies.

Among modern schools one looks instinctively to St. Leonards as the first school where an attempt was made to give to girls an analogous education to that offered by the boys' public schools. We are all reaping the benefit of a due recognition of the playing-field. Girton, among colleges, took a characteristically broad-minded position on the subject of girls' physical recreation from the first, but then, without school influence to begin with, a true understanding of the spirit of sport is rare. All the sadly ridiculous characteristics of girls as "sportswomen," which are so justly laughed at by men, are destined to disappear when girls, like their brothers, meet games naturally from childhood, and when they are obliged to submit to the discipline of public opinion and traditional etiquette.

Some idea of the big challenge events at St. Leonards was given to me by an "old girl" who had herself taken a very prominent part in the school games. The general impression was very much like that left by reminiscences of a public-school boy. The school started with the advantage, from a games standpoint, of possessing several "houses." It is between elevens from these houses that the big Challenge Shield is battled for. This shield

THE CRICKET CUP.
Played for by Girton and Newnham. Won by Newnham in 1901.

constitutes the trophy for cricket, lacrosse, and hockey, the three being in turn the official school games. In addition to the shield, cup matches are played by the House second elevens. Each house has, of course, its distinguishing colours, and several have special badges. The old girl's badge consists of an enamelled brooch in imitation of the shield, and bears the school crest in relief. There are also challenge trophies for lawn tennis, fives, and golf. The House Challenge Cup is for doubles in tennis and fives, and for foursomes in golf. Singles in lawn tennis are played for a School Brooch, and for golf there is a Term Medal.

In many private schools where such an elaborate system for games is precluded, some special trophy for lawn tennis is found to increase the keenness of play, and, as it can be played for by individuals, the winner, even where only a small number of pupils are taken, must play through several rounds, and may rightly consider it an honour to be proved the school champion.

THE NEWNHAM AND GIRTON HOCKEY CUP.
At present held by Newnham.

THE LAWN TENNIS CUP.
For Girton and Newnham Singles. Held fourteen times by Girton and five by Newnham.

At Mayfield, Old Southgate, where there are thirty to forty girls, the standard of excellence in games is high. There are not enough girls for any school challenge trophy in hockey, but the team has taken first-class rank, and several of its members have won their county colours. Lawn tennis is very popular at this school, and the silver challenge cup seen in our illustration was won outright by Miss Mabel Black.

A third description of Challenge Trophy for schools is the Shield played for by representatives from the various schools of the Girls' Public Day Schools Company. The hockey matches are extremely popular and play is very keen. Last season the Silver Challenge Cup was won by Blackheath, Sydenham having been defeated by 5 goals to nil in the final. This cup was given in 1897, and the first competition resulted in a draw between Blackheath and Sutton. In 1898 Blackheath won, in 1899 Sutton won, and in 1900 Blackheath won again. Wimble-

THE DOUBLE LAWN TENNIS CUP.
Played for by Girton and Newnham. Won [illegible] times by Girton and six by Newnham.

THE "OWL" LAWN TENNIS TROPHY.
Held by the first champion of the winning side in the Inter-'Varsity Lawn Tennis Match.

don in 1901 secured the first win against the two schools previously so successful, but last season Blackheath beat them in the second round by 4 goals to 1. The lawn tennis matches for the Challenge Shield shown in our illustration are played in a similar way, by pairs from each of the schools. Last season Wimbledon was successful.

If the opening for athletic challenge trophies be wide for both large and small schools and for inter-school matches, it may be supposed that at the women's colleges, at Cambridge and Oxford more especially, challenge trophies have been instistituted for the big annual events.

Lawn tennis was at first the great game played at Oxford and Cambridge, but for a number of seasons hockey has flourished, and it would now be difficult to say whether the greatest athletic event is the annual Oxford and Cambridge lawn tennis match or the hockey match. For both there is always an enthusiastic muster of present and past students. Curiously enough, however, the results of both contests have for several seasons been in the nature of foregone conclusions. Oxford has been stronger in lawn tennis, and Cambridge in hockey. The inter-collegiate matches, as being less monotonous in results, are more interesting.

The oldest of the challenge trophies at the women's 'varsities are the silver owl and the gold medal presented respectively by Mr. E. N. Buxton and Mr. A. Johnston in 1882 for the first and second champions of the winning side in the Inter-'Varsity lawn tennis match. The owl seems a quaint design for an athletic trophy, but Minerva has certainly lived to see her followers able to hold their own with those of a rival goddess. To these two challenge mementoes a cup was added in 1894, the gift of Miss I. Scrimgeour. All three trophies are at present held by representatives of Oxford.

In 1883 Miss C. A. Scott gave a lawn tennis challenge cup to be played for by Girton and Newnham. This has been held twelve times by Girton and six times by Newnham. It was last held by Newnham in 1898. Since 1899 it has been played for by three couples from each college, and has been won by Girton.

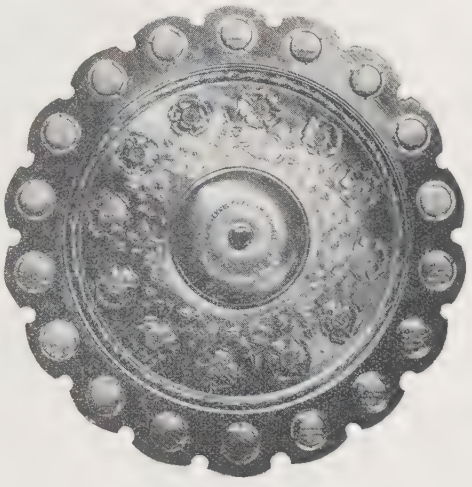
The challenge cup for the Girton and Newnham singles was bought in 1883, and at present is held by Newnham. It has now been won five times by Newnham and fourteen times by Girton. It will be understood that it is by no means a foregone conclusion that the college which has the strongest single champion should also prove strongest in doubles, and in 1899 also the singles cup was held by Newnham. Girton, however, has proved, when the whole results are considered, the strongest college in lawn tennis.

THE WOMEN'S INTER-'VARSITY LAWN TENNIS CHALLENGE CUP.
At present held by Oxford.

When it is remembered that the first English and Irish international hockey match was played in 1896, it will be realised that the presentation of the Girton and Newnham hockey cup by Miss A. Elliot of Newnham, in 1893, is a very early chapter in the history of hockey. Annual matches between the two colleges were started in 1892, and of

all the inter-collegiate contests, these hockey matches have proved most exciting. Twice the match has been drawn, and, out of the eleven which have been played in all, Newnham has won seven and Girton four. Newnham holds the cup, having beaten Girton this season by 5 goals to 3. In 1901 Newnham won, and Girton in 1900.

Inter-'Varsity hockey matches between Oxford and Cambridge were first played in 1894, and a challenge cup was presented a few seasons ago by Miss Scott of Somerville. Cambridge has won on every occasion except in 1896, when the dark blue XI. was victorious. This season Cambridge beat Oxford by 2 goals to nil.



THE G.P.D.S. CO.'S LAWN TENNIS CHALLENGE SHIELD.

Offered, in perpetual challenge, by the Council of the Girls' Public Day School Company. It is at present held by Wimbledon High School.

The only challenge trophy limited to the students within the college at Girton is the golf challenge brooch which was presented by Miss Jackson in 1893. At Newnham all the three Halls, "Old," "Sidgwick," and "Clough," have subordinate tennis, hockey, cricket, and fives clubs, and there are cup matches for the Hall teams, the best players being selected from the Hall players to represent the whole college.

The Colman lawn tennis cup is played for by one champion from each Hall every term. It has been held by "Sidgwick" twenty-three times, by "Clough" nine times, and by "Old," the present holder, seven times. Before Clough Hall was built, the cup had been held eleven times by "Sidgwick" and five times by "Old." The Balfour Cup was presented by the Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, and is played for annually, in the May term, by two champions from each Hall. Since all three Halls have competed for it, "Sidgwick," the present holder, has held it nine times, "Clough" three times, and "Old" twice. Before that "Sidgwick" and "Old" had each won it three times.

Many have been the exciting struggles for the possession of the Lawrence hockey cup, which was won in February last by "Clough." "Clough" has been successful on four occasions, "Sidgwick" five times, and "Old" three times. There have been two drawn matches between "Sidgwick" and "Clough," and one between "Sidgwick" and "Old." Besides these challenge cups there are three pewters, one for "freshers'" hockey, and two for lawn tennis, singles and doubles. The latter are played for by those not good enough to be among the ten or twelve elected to the college tennis club, but who are in the first division of each Hall tennis club.

The Tabor cup for fives has been won four times running by "Old," and that Hall has now been successful fifteen times. "Sidgwick" has held it eight times.

Latest of all, the Hall cricket cup was given by Miss H. F. Cohen in 1897. It was first tied for by "Clough" and "Sidgwick." "Clough" won it in 1898, "Sidgwick" in 1899, "Clough" in 1900, and "Sidgwick" in 1901.

The Girton and Newnham cricket cup was presented in 1897 by Miss L. B. Legg, of Newnham. The first holder was Girton; Newnham won in 1898, Girton was then successful for two seasons running, and then in 1901 Newnham won.

At the Royal Holloway College silver badges are given to the two lawn tennis champions for their racquets. There is also a hockey cup played for by the "corridors."

The following pages are entirely the work of girls, both as to letterpress and illustrations. "Our Readers' Own Realm" appears three times a year, and has been started to give girls an opportunity of putting their work to the test of public and editorial criticism.

THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

THE NOVEL COMPETITION.

First Class, for Girls under Twenty-five.

THE chief fault of the stories that have come up for competition (the first and the last chapters of a novel with the intermediate part blocked in) is that the writers have tried to tell so much of their plot in the first chapter, that they have left little to be said in the intermediate one; until they reach the last, when they finish their tale. If my girls would study one of our masterpieces, say "Jane Eyre," or "Adam Bede," or "Silas Marner," they will find that the first chapter opens so naturally that much is foreshadowed in it, but that it does not tell an undue share of the story. In "Jane Eyre," for instance, we have distinctly placed before us the unhappy childhood of Jane. The key-note of her character is struck. Much is told us of her forlorn position, and we have hints given us of an uncle over the sea. This is almost all. Currer Bell would have blocked in the school life and its friendships, its trials and its few and apparently arid joys. Then would come her resolve to be a governess and her arrival into the Hall, her meeting with Rochester and so on, until the terrible interrupted marriage scene, Jane's flight and her temptation to accept St. John's offer of marriage, when she hears Rochester's voice calling to her over the moors. Lastly would come the meeting with her old master, told in full. My girls have striven hard, but even the best of their attempts—and there have been many—have failed in carrying out their intention.

THE HON. LILIAN HENNIKER.

Who has carried off the First Prize in the Coronation Poem Competition.

First Prize.

In "Gaynor Dereynt"

HONOR BATCHELOR (aged 23),
7, Lansdowne Place,
Blackheath,

has understood best the requirement of the competition. She is inclined to trust too much to the charm of writing and to delicacy of treatment. There is a lack of very strong incident in her proposed novel; which is one of character rather than of sensation. To her has been awarded the first prize, value One Guinea.

Second Prize.

The second prize, value 10s. 6d., is divided between

IRENE MAUNDER (aged 21),
86, Tyrwhitt Road, St. John's, S.E.,

and MAY TIMMS (aged 21),
"Mayfield," Kingsley Road,
Northampton.

The subject of Irene Maunder's "His Father's Book" is too slight for a novel, and it would have to be greatly strengthened in incident and character-drawing. May Timm's "An Unnecessary Experience" is slight, but it is humorous. The boarding-house kept by the three sisters and the quaint characters that visit it; the curiously abstracted father, and the arrival in the boarding-house of the step-mother under a disguised name, are all suggestive.

Second Class, for Girls under Sixteen.

The stories of the Second Class from sixteen downwards are very good as a whole. Some of them possess imaginative qualities of a higher order than any sent in by the first class.

First Prize.

The "Snake," an allegorical story of sin and temptation, by

GLADYS PARRISH (aged 13),
Hotel Royal, Via Venti Settembre,
Rome,

is very strong and suggestive. It is indeed a wonderful

LOUISA FITNESS.
Awarded a share of the First Prize in the Handicraft Competition.

story for a child to have written, and carries off the first prize, value 10s. 6d.

Second Prize.

The second prize, value 7s. 6d., is awarded to

EMMIE BARSTOW (aged 14),
Seton Castle, Longniddry, N.B.

Her "Rose-Tree Story" is a very charming tale, fanciful and tender.

ALINE ROSA ELLIS.
She wins the First Prize in the Second Class for the best Drawing.

CECILY FRYER.
Winner of the Second Prize in the Coronation Poem Competition.

THE DRAWING COMPETITION.

Class I., for Girls under Twenty-five.

There were a very great number of entries in this competition, but while several of the drawings were of exceptional merit, the average was not so good as usual, the girls under sixteen having decidedly carried off the palm. The first prize, value One Guinea, has been won by

CHRISTABEL DENNISON (aged 17),
Overdene, Aldenham Road, Bushey, Herts.,

for a remarkable portrait of an old man. The second prize, value 10s. 6d., is taken by

JENNIE HERRIES (aged 17),
31, Southey Place, Bradford, Yorks.,

for the drawing, "Blindman's Buff." This prize was awarded after considerable hesitation, as a number of other drawings had great merit. It was thought, however, that it was a difficult subject, boldly attacked, and mastered with unusual success for a girl of seventeen.

JOYCE CRAWFORD.
Awarded the Second Prize in the Second Class of the Drawing Competition.

Class II., for Girls under Sixteen.

There is no question that the drawings sent in by the younger girls show a far higher average of merit than those in Class I. There is a greater freedom in their work; they exhibit a keener desire to be out of doors with their pencil, ignoring the familiar "properties" which we all know so well. The first prize, value 10s. 6d., goes to

ALINE ROSA ELLIS (aged 15),
The Elms, Bishop Auckland,

for a drawing which I think my readers will agree is remarkable as the original work of a girl of fifteen. The second prize, value 7s. 6d., is won by

JOYCE CRAWFORD (aged 10),
Springfield, Queenstown, Ireland,

or a set of sketches at a circus, which show unusual original talent.

THE HANDICRAFT COMPETITION.

First Class, for Girls under Twenty-five.

This competition proved one of the most popular of those announced in the January Readers' Own Realm. Some of the specimens of needlework and handicraft sent in were very beautiful; others extremely ingenious. The First Prize, value One Guinea, is divided between

LOUISA FITNESS (aged 23),
91, Sandgate Road, Folkestone,

who receives 12s. 6d., for an exquisitely finished rug in cream material, ornamented with a bold floral design in yellow silks; and (10s. 6d.),

MAY M. MEREDITH (aged 23),
Leonard Bank, Beulah Hill, Norwood, S.E.,

who sent in a dozen doilies, on which were executed clever pen-and-ink copies of some of Cruikshank's finest "David Copperfield" drawings. The Second Prize, value 10s. 6d., is awarded to

ANNZELLA PAGE (aged 20),
Hawesmead, Kendal,

for an original design, executed in colour, for a pair of bellows.

Second Class, for Girls under Sixteen.

The First Prize, value 10s. 6d., is awarded to

ROSAMOND HARRIS (aged 14),
76, Woodstock Road, Oxford,

for a white satin table-cloth, the pattern of which is exquisitely carried out in delicate-hued ribbons. The originality of the work was what commended it. Second comes

MAY TIMMS.
Sharer of the First Prize in the Essay Competition.

THE STUDY OF A HEAD.
By CHRISTABEL DENNISON (aged 17).
First Prize Drawing in the First Class.

HELENA M. HUBBARD (aged 15),
Basing House, Wilton Road, Salisbury,
who is awarded the prize of 5s. for a set of pin-cushions, needle-case, etc., of white satin, daintily hand-painted.

ESSAY COMPETITION.

"Some Humble Folk I Have Met."

The Essays sent in about "SOME HUMBLE FOLK I HAVE MET" are very good. Some of the best describe one character only, whose quaintness, originality or sweetness is graphically described.

First Class, for Girls under Twenty-five.

It is difficult to decide which is the best paper sent in. I have divided the prize, value One Guinea, between

MAY TIMMS (aged 20),
"Mayfield," Kingsley Road,
Northampton, and

ALICE GRANT ROSMAN (aged 19),
South Terrace,
Adelaide, South Australia.

Second Class, for Girls under Sixteen.

There are not many essays in this class, but they are expressed with *naïveté*.

I have divided the prize of 10s. 6d. between

GWLADYS H. HARRIS (15),
"The Corner," Rock Terrace,
Mumbles, R.S.O., Glamorgan
and NORAH PICKTHALL (13),
Wimborne Road, Bournemouth, Hants.

POEMS ON THE CORONATION.

A great number of the poems are of exceptional merit. Competitors were allowed to treat the subject humorously or otherwise, and it is curious to notice how sharp the dividing line is between the serious poems and the others—they are either touched with the sadness of the thought, "God rest the Dead," or they are quite rollicking in the way they poke fun at the claims for ancient offices and for precedents, and the strutting of the provincial mayors.

The Prize, value 10s. 6d., in the First Class is awarded to

LILIAN HENNIKER (aged 21),
Government House, Douglas, Isle of Man,

and in the Second Class, value 5s., to

CECILY M. FRYER (aged 15),
Bury Hill, Woodbridge.

A CORONATION POEM.

BY THE HON. LILIAN HENNIKER.

Thought, as an ocean wide and deep
Which flows for ever 'neath the waves
That surge above, like truths that sleep,
Arous'd by Man from seeming graves,
Hath ever changing outward show
To mark the mind which lies below.

With costly robes and radiant gems,
With waving flags and glances gay,
The King and Queen in diadems,
Though hearts be sad, we greet this day—
For Thought would tell in mingled strain,
What solemn joy it is to reign.

AN EVENING IN FEBRUARY.
By ANNZELLA PAGE (aged 20).
A First Class Honourable Mention.

THE ROSE-TREE STORY.

PRIZE STORY.

By EMMIE BARSTOW (aged 14).

I AM only a rose,—a simple white rose-tree, of no particular value, size, or in any way out of the common. Still, I have a story of my own, or at least a story of those I loved. My earliest remembrances are of a home in a corner of a most picturesque old garden.

Not one that is kept beautifully neat and tidy, and in which the borders are always bright with the dear old-fashioned stock, sweet mignonette, and cabbage-rose. No, the garden in which I grew was a place where vegetables, flowers, and weeds lived together, in plentiful confusion,—and yet it was a beautiful spot. At the other side stood a ruin; it was very, very old, for the owl who lived in the large oak close by said that his great-great-grandfather had been the first of his ancestors to settle in that neighbourhood; and that in his day everything had been as it was now—very, very old. The ruin was beautiful, with its old windows and gables, which were gradually crumbling away with age.

I used to watch the sun rise above this ruin in the early summer mornings, and touch its mantle of thick green ivy, of many, many years' growth, with his bright light, making the dew upon it shine and sparkle like diamonds. And at night the moon would send her rays through the chinks and crevices of that old wall And a ray, perhaps more inquisitive than the rest, would shyly peep into one of the hundreds of nests in the ivy and watch the sleeping birds, who were all my friends.

In this dear old spot I grew and throve for many years, till I was removed to ——— but never mind where, that will come later. Everything about my new home was very old: the house and the two maiden ladies to whom it belonged—in fact, the only youthful creatures were those about whom I am going to tell you.

Those were two children, brother and sister. The boy was eight, deformed, and very delicate. But he had a pair of beautiful sad brown eyes. The girl was ten and lovely, and her eyes resembled her brother's; she also was delicate. Little Tom Tit, who was a friend of mine, said the children were sad because their parents were dead, and their old aunts were not kind to them.

I belonged to them equally. They called me Snow Queen, and never a day passed without their coming to see me. In the summer they would try to count my white roses, or, perhaps, pull a handful for some sick person in the village. In the autumn they would bring a pruning knife and chip and chop my straggling branches.

One evening in early June they came as usual to visit me. The sun had shone bright and warm all day, and my white buds were beginning to open for the first time.

"Oh, look, brother! Snow Queen has got two roses, they are almost large enough to pull," cried the girl joyfully.

"No, Sis, don't pick them to-day; wait till to-morrow," the boy replied wearily. "Let us go home, for my head is aching so badly."

The girl put one arm lovingly round his mis-shapen little figure and turning to me said, "You have escaped to-day, dear Snow Queen, but to-morrow we are coming again."

THE ELDEST SEA-MAID TELLING WHAT SHE HAS SEEN.—(HANS ANDERSEN'S LITTLE SEA-MAID.)

By MARGARET E. VOELCKER (aged 15).

Awarded a Diploma in the Second Class of the Drawing Competition.

STUDY OF A GIRL.

By MURIEL W. HAYWOOD.

Awarded a Diploma in the First Class.

"Yes, to-morrow," the boy murmured softly, "to-morrow."

All next day I waited for the little feet to come running into the garden, but I waited in vain. And no one appeared the day after, when I had quite a number of roses. The third day dawned; by then I was a mass of beautiful white blossoms. Were they to fall and die in that secluded spot, unseen or appreciated? "Will they never come?" I cried aloud.

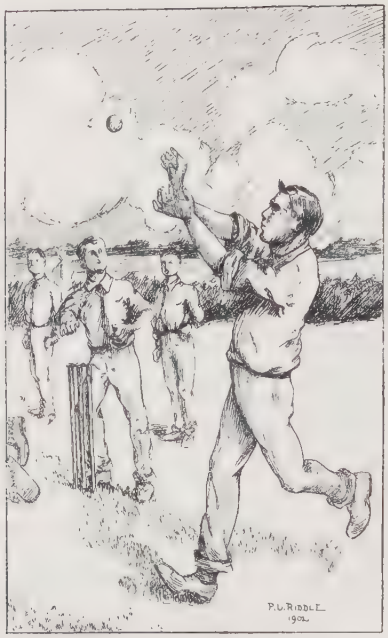
That evening, as the sun set in the far, far west, I heard the patter of approaching feet, and the little girl came up to me sobbing as though her heart would break. She picked every rose off my branches, put them in her pinafore, and then returned to the house, crying bitterly.

What was the reason of those tears? I asked myself, anxiously.

A few days after she came again, bringing with her a small spade. She dug me carefully out of the ground and carried me to the old churchyard, about a mile from her home. There, in a far corner, on a new-made grave, she planted me.

"Snow Queen," she cried, sinking on the little mound, "Snow Queen, you can always be near him now."

It was in that position they found her next morning, and took her away. A fortnight later there was another grave beside the one on which I had been planted.



A HOT CATCH.

By PHILLIS U. RIDDLE (aged 16).

Awarded a Diploma in the First Class.

THE CORONATION.

BY M. BARRY (AGED 20).

The Coronation,
Och! botheration!
Shure an' the counthry is upside down
Wid animation
An' preparation;
Faith, 'tis enough to make a saint frown.

I says, "Be aisy,
Ye'll drive me crazy,"
Yesterday, when someone said
"Ould Mrs. Dundon
Is goin' to London
To see the Crown on the King's head."

I wiped me eye
(For I began to cry),
But all I said was "God rest the dead"

A SWISS LANDSCAPE.

By CÉCILE COLOMB (aged 18).

Awarded a First Class Diploma.

SOME HUMBLE FOLK I HAVE MET

PRIZE ESSAY.

By MAY H. TIMMS (aged 20).

IN the village by the sea that was once, for a short while, my home, the people were chiefly humble. There was "Aunt Margaret," who lived in the tiny cottage on the green, and was the friend of every man, woman, and child in the place. Strangers were wont to smile when they saw her enter the little Mission House on Sunday, clasping a spring of "lad's love," and clad in garments years behind the times. But we, who knew her well, looked and saw the heart beneath. She was the most unselfish woman I have ever met; would have given away her all. Once, I remember, I overtook her carrying some luxury she had made to a sick child. On our return I invited myself to supper with her, and I can even now recall the ashamed, apologetic smile with which she explained that there was nothing in the house but bread.

She had come to the village one summer for a fortnight, and had stayed there ever since. No one knew her past, or of the existence of any nephews and nieces, yet we all called her "Aunt," and whatever unknown cause it was that sent her among us, the day of her coming was for us always blessed.

AT THE STILE.

By DOROTHEA COHN (aged 15).

Awarded a Diploma in the Second Class.

One of the most frequent recipients of "Aunt Margaret's" little gifts was a man named "Hoppety," so called by reason of his wooden leg; if he had ever had another name the village had forgotten it. Because of his infirmity he was never able to do much regular work, and he was known amongst us as a "hardened old cadger." He was never grateful, and rarely took the trouble to thank anyone for a gift. Occasionally, only—if he thought anything might be gained by it—he did so, somewhat after this fashion: on the afternoon before Good Friday he would meet me in the village street, touch his cap, and remark casually,—"'Appy to see yer well, Miss . . . beautiful arternoon . . . I've never thanked yer, Miss, for they buns yer gev me last Good Friday. Fust-rate they was! thank yer kindly, Miss." The result being, as he had shrewdly foreseen, that on the next morning I very weakly sent him some more.

One of the humblest of them all—in the estimation of everyone but himself—was Billy O'Brien. Of his own importance he had a great opinion. Indeed, at one period of his life it rose to such lofty heights that

it was deemed prudent to separate him from the lowly companions with whom he was wont to associate. He was breaking stones at the side of the road when I first saw him, singing, in his quavering old voice :

"Dare to be a Daniel !
Dare to stand alone !"

His ambition in life was to be a local preacher, more, I am afraid, for the glory of standing in the little pulpit as the centre of wondering admiration than from a desire to save the souls of men. But his efforts were not crowned with the success he had hoped for, and after a while he limited his oratorical powers to the junior afternoon class. "My dear children," he invariably began, "if ye'll gimme yer intentions I won't contain ye long ;" but they never did give him their "intentions," and at length Billy gave up "containing" them.

"The brats don't seem to have no souls in 'em," he would say, sorrowfully

Billy's love for his old wife "Lizer" was the strongest passion of his life. I have often met them in the sweet summer evenings, ambling arm-in-arm along the quiet country lanes, the light of love seeming to illuminate their rugged old faces, and making them almost beautiful. It was on returning once after a week's absence from home that they told me Billy's wife was dead, and that the shock had turned his brain. Billy was sitting by the fireside when I entered, and I have never forgotten the expression of haughty disdain on his face as I offered him my hand. "Go down on yer knees," he said, drawing his puny frame to its utmost height, "is it after standing ye'd be in the presence of the King of England ?" The next night he tried to exercise his kingly rights by cutting off the head of his small granddaughter, and it was then that they took Billy to the asylum.

Three months later he was well again and in his old place breaking stones. "They'd some funny notions, the people up theer where I bin a'staying," he said, confidentially. "I'm mortal glad to get back to me stones." And there he remained among them, until he was eighty-five, when he quietly slipped away to join the great majority beyond—and "Lizer."

THE CORONATION.

BY NORAH PICKTHALL (AGED 13).

(*Diploma.*)

O'er mighty England's large and vast domains
A hush has fallen. Murmurs rise and fall
Upon the wind, like ebbing of the tide,
A hush prevails– and expectation reigns.

For every English heart on Earth's wide breast
Is looking forward to that day in June
When, clad in robes of ermine, England's king
Will rise and rule the land to him addressed.

Ah ! let him ever strive to follow *her*,
His Mother, of Earth's habitants the best,
Who, free from any sorrow, any pain,
Lies slumbering now in dreamless, dreamless rest.

A higher model mortal never had,
And on that soft sweet day of leafy June
Her son is crowned, ay, this the happy cry
That makes the hearts of all her people glad.

DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE.

By ALINE ROSA ELLIS (aged 15).

This Drawing has been awarded the First Prize in the Second Class.

SOME HUMBLE FOLK I HAVE KNOWN.

PRIZE ESSAY.

By GWLADYS H. HARRIS (aged 15).

IN a little village, not far from the Malvern Hills, live an interesting old couple whose portraits I will endeavour to sketch. They belong to a class that is fast dying out, for the man is a peasant-farmer and cultivates his own tiny bit of freehold land.

Both have long passed middle age, but Father Time has dealt gently with them, and the tall, handsome old man forms a striking contrast to his wife. She is short and round, with a face like a ruddy winter apple, and dressed in a bunchy print gown with short sleeves, a big apron, and a cottager's sun-bonnet, she seems the very incarnation of honest, homely industry.

Mr. and Mrs. "Jarge" (as their neighbours call them) possess about five acres of land, most of it planted with fruit trees, and a part of it devoted to a large kitchen-garden.

STUDY OF A HEAD.

By WINIFRED F. RAKE (aged 18).

Awarded a Diploma in the First Class in the Drawing Competition.

Two or three sleek cows find pasturage in the little field or under the trees, where their supremacy is only disputed by the feathered multitude of ducks and fowls.

Every week Mrs. "Jarge" sends to market plump poultry, eggs, and pats of primrose butter; the skim milk and every scrap of refuse food going to feed the pig, whose fat sides will one day adorn the kitchen rafters.

In the autumn the trees are stripped of their wealth of fruit, the proceeds of which go to increase the little store which must support this worthy couple should they chance upon a rainy day; for to receive charity would be of all things most repugnant to them.

In the delightful kitchen, strings of onions, bunches of herbs, with sides of home-cured bacon, hang from the ceiling, and a big tabby cat lies curled up on the window-sill, asleep in the sun. The furniture seems absolutely to wink in its polished cleanliness, and the ticking of the grandfather's clock in the corner is answered by the clatter of Mrs. "Jarge's" hobnailed boots as she bustles about the room.

The old woman's busy hands are the only things that can rival her tongue in its unceasing activity; the torrents of words poured forth by her is confusing to a stranger by the broad dialect in which they are uttered.

Honesty and shrewdness, thrift and industry—above all, independence—such, in a few words, are the characteristics of old "Jarge" and his wife.

In this same village the shoemaker is a little hunch-back, almost a dwarf, who has been forced to adopt his sedentary occupation because his infirmity unfits him for agricultural labour. Straggling elf-locks of coarse grey hair shadow his wrinkled face and keen, bird-like black eyes; all about him must be kept with the same scrupulous neatness which marks his own personal appearance.

His wife is devoted to her John, and both speak of their tall, handsome son with a pride which is almost pathetic.

The cottage the three live in is the old man's own property, bought as the result of many years' hard work, and his leisure hours are spent in training fruit trees and creepers on its walls, or in cultivating the little garden which is his pride and delight. Here, summer after summer, bloom masses of roses, sweet-peas, carnations, and multitudinous other blossoms, whose scent fills the air for yards around, and hither does the old man conduct his favoured customers, to present them (if they be flower-lovers) with a brilliant and fragrant nosegay.

The following will be interesting as being contributions from readers of THE GIRL'S REALM.

AN END AND A BEGINNING.

By SYLVIA BRETT.

IN a field, by the side of a deep and quickly running river, a man lay. The sun was burning overhead, but he did not seem to mind it. His clothes were torn and covered with dust, for he had walked many miles. He lay, with his head propped up by his hands, idly kicking the ground with his toes, until the once brilliant bluebells and clover were swept down and crushed beyond recognition among the long grass.

What are his thoughts, as over his begrimed features there creeps a wistful, longing look? He is wondering what the place is like that he has so often heard people talk about, called Home. He is thinking how happy those people must be to have such a resting-place. And yet as he looks around him what could be more beautiful? The field, with its bright colouring of many different flowers, the lovely cloudless sky and, last of all, the rushing swirling river. What, again, could be more beautiful?

He sighs wearily, fixing his vacant blue eyes on the river, and as he looks and looks, he seems to see a picture—of himself—but as he was years ago. More and more distinctly he sees a boy sitting by a woman, his face alight with eagerness, his arms round the woman's neck, while he hears the echo of a soft, kind voice as she reads to him or tells him many a tale. The woman is his mother, the boy—himself. He smiles sadly at the

vision. Then the waves of the rushing torrent change the scene, as the waves of time had changed his life. Looking down into the water he sees himself—as he is now. A fierce, dirty face glares up at him from out of the water with an angry pathos. Instead of the joyful frankness of the years gone by, an expression like a hunted stag is in his eyes. What is the good of his trying to get on? he will only go to the dogs. Far better for him to end his miserable existence; but how?

The answer came from the river. He staggered to his feet, every nerve in his body tingling. He would do it. The river was calling him. The noise of the water made him deaf, or he would have heard the sound of approaching feet, would have seen the figure of a little girl now close behind him, in her hand a basket of newly-plucked flowers. As the man drew back for his final spring, the child touched his arm. He turned on her savagely, then, as he saw the clear eyes so confidently raised to his, the anger passed.

The child took some of the flowers from her basket and offered them to him. He took them: then something gentle in his nature made him stoop and kiss the innocent giver. Turning, he strode away, waving now and again to the little figure standing amidst the bluebells. The child never knew that she had in that moment saved a man's life and made him turn once more with a brave and cheerful heart to trudge along the dusty roads of life.

"YES OR NO?"

By DOROTHY DANIELL (aged 18).

First Class Diploma.

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF THEIR MAJESTIES' FIRST COURT.

BY A DÉBUTANTE.

(Written by one of my girls who was present.)

THE weather on that eventful evening was not encouraging. When, after meekly submitting to the tyrannical sway of the hairdresser, dressmaker, and other well-meaning individuals for three hours, we were at last pronounced to be quite ready for the coming ordeal, a hopelessly wet night confronted us.

My mother and I, carrying bouquets and followed by our reluctant trains, were packed with much difficulty into a closed landau; my father, in full dress uniform, got in after us, and off we went. For a few minutes we drove briskly, then stopped. We had taken our place in the line of carriages, and the patient waiting, one of the evening's chief features, had begun. After a time we crept on slowly towards Buckingham Palace, the bells of Westminster Abbey pealing merrily the while. How we pitied those poor, patient individuals, standing under dripping umbrellas, trying in vain to catch a glimpse of the occupants of the carriages! Thinking that the sight of us in all our fine clothes would please them, we let down our window: but the rain came in on our dresses, and we were obliged to shut ourselves up again.

Buckingham Palace, when at last we reached it, was like a dream. The broad, well-lighted corridors, the noble staircases, the Yeomen of the Guard standing like statues in their picturesque uniform, and the lofty picture galleries filled with their Majesties' expectant guests, made one feel that one was indeed in a royal mansion, the fit abode of a great king.

It was an exciting time, but I did not feel as nervous as one might expect. The only thing that weighed on my mind, when we reached the Palace, was the momentous question, not decided till the last minute: Would the King wish the débutantes to kiss his hand? Now, having practised till I was stiff, I felt fairly confident that I should be able to get through my curtseys in comparative safety, but should I be able to kiss the royal hand without losing my balance and clinging on to it in my despair? The thought was a terrible one, and I hurried up to an official, a cousin of mine, with the breathless question, "Do we keep *both* gloves on?" The answer being in the affirmative, my peace of mind was assured, and I prepared to enjoy myself.

The waiting did seem rather long, but we feasted our eyes on the lovely dresses and jewellery (especially the diamonds) and the gorgeous uniforms of the good-natured, happy crowd in which we found ourselves. When our turn came to move into another room, there was no struggling or pushing. I kept between my father and mother, and at last we entered the ball-room, at the extreme end from that where their Majesties were standing, and separated from them by a throng of ambassadors, Cabinet ministers, and other notabilities. The King's band was playing softly, and we caught a glimpse of the King and Queen bowing graciously and looking very regal. They were standing, side by side, in advance of the Royal Family, and not on a daïs as stated in some accounts. We had to pass out

"BLIND MAN'S BUFF."

By JENNIE F. HERRIES (aged 17).

Awarded the Second Prize in the First Class of the Drawing Competition.

by one of the four doors of the ball-room, and fall into single file, before we re-entered it by a door much nearer the King and Queen.

The terrible moment had come at last. I watched my mother's train, heard her name announced, and saw her make her reverence. Then my turn came. The Lord Chamberlain called out my name in loud, clear tones. I caught the King's eye on me, and made, alas! my very worst curtsey, then, a step or two farther, another to Queen Alexandra, who looked sweet and gracious in pale cream satin. A few steps beyond, my train was caught up and put over my arm, and the ordeal was over. I must confess to having felt rather queer while it lasted.

The evening was one of the most interesting and enjoyable I have ever spent. C. H.

OUR ROLL OF HONOUR.

STORY COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Lilian Henniker
Esther G. Bell
Kathleen M. Bell
Maud Mary Lyne
Annie Latham McClure
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Winifred C. Shepheard
Nina M. Cook
Magdalen R. Barry
Violet Maxwell

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Constance A. Bedwell
Ada M. Whitehead
Eveline Connell
Gladys Graham
Dorothy A. Harrison
Olive Rayner
"Jess"
Eveline Rundle Saul
Mollie Siddons
Ida Mullins
"Francia"
Vera G. Blackstone
Violet Legge
Blanche Agnes Tracy
Marie Brüll
Isabel Buckingham
Silvia Tatham

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Lucy Malet
Mary W. Mogg
May Donley
Nancy Maude
Beatrice Mary Terry
Claire Evelyn Mamelsdorf
Audrey K. Plummer
Mabel South

HONOURABLE MENTION.

"Olive"
Mary A. Bleaden
"El Dorado"
Cecil Mary Baines
Eileen Hynes
Edna Smallwood
"Nil Desperandum"
Dorothy Pilton
Inez Florence Dicksee
Phyllis Carr
Norah Pickthall
Gladys Mary Townley
Dora Prunetti
Lucy Lockett Ayers
Gladys Constance Leech
Emily Ferris
E. J. Elwyn
Ruth P. Le Sueur
"Brya"
Maud Francis Smith
Minnie Bryant
Agnes Jones
"Bluebell"
Dora B. Nanson
Phyllis Dean Evens
Sydney Tabor

DRAWING COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Winifred Fanny Rake
Agnes Richardson
Ada Mary Whitehead
Dorothy Daniell
Phillis Ursula Riddle
Beatrice Maria Stephens
Gertrude Helen Boyes
Ella Fountaine Mangin
Cécile Colomb
Winifred E. Robson
Muriel Wightwick Haywood
Dulcie Popham
"Tirza"
Alice Margaret Upcher
Emily Dorothy Drake
Elsie Carey Thomas
Elsie Hyde
Silvia Tatham
Doris Violet Arthur
Eva Dudley
Mabel Alice Banks
Pansy Martin
Clarice Augusta Hicks
Maud Centaro

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Annzella Page
Anita Robinson
Ada E. van Kinschot
Katherine Emma Shenton
Gladys Mary K. Fraser Duff
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Nora Woollwarth
Molly Williams
Jocelyn Leigh
Ethel R. West
Edyth Ball
Maud Stedman
Gladys L. Dalrymple
Gladys Haslewood
F. Fitzmaurice Deane Morgan
Florence Mary Clark
Marjory Mary Taylor
Helen E. M. Wylde
Maude McCluskie
Theresa Butchart
Edith Charlotte Adams
"Jess"
Judith Austin Bower
Nellie Mountford
Cara Rowlandson
Daisy Alice Knight
Maude Mary Hanson
Edith Mary Chettle
Ethel Chubb
Alice de Nexon
Mabel Bayliss
Phœbe Rennell
Margaret Mary Lovett
Emilie Colomb
Effie Farren
Cecil M. Cardale

HONOURABLE MENTION.—*Continued.*

Annie M. Hopkins
Mabel E. Clark
Jessie F. Doherty
Elsie Landstone
Dorothy Lawrence
Vera Stuckey
Dora Frederica Chapman

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Gladys M. Hynes
Dorothea Waterston
Winifred Mary Harman
Ethel Louise Nathan
Dorothea Cohn
Margaret Ellison Voelcker
Janet Eveline Hull

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Phyllis Helen Carr
Doris Emily Nelson
Hazel Christopher
Gladys Mary Townley
Minnie Katherine Bryant
Marian Wadsworth
Margaret Lumley Brown
Edith May Stevenson
Gladys Stevenson
Kathleen Muriel Todd
Mary Agnes Massie
Dorothy Louisa Hudson
Vera F. Salomons
Hilda Walden
Lada Perman
Hilda M. Harris
Mabel Greenwood
Helena M. Hubbard
Mabel Edith Hanson
Constance Norris Palethorpe
Gertrude Wilby
Ethel Jagger

HANDICRAFT COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Vera Scott
Clarice A. Hicks
Muriel Pyman
Edith Roper
Nellie Casseres
Emily Vaughan Forrest
Gladys Rose Phipps
Winifred C. Shepheard
Avice G. Haydon

HONOURABLE MENTION.—Flora Clayton Mayers

Second Class.

DIPLOMA.—Dorothy Jessie Nicholls

ESSAY COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Hetta Pepper
Amy Nankivell
Lilian Boag
Beatrice M. Rashleigh
Grace H. Cumings
Jessie Phillips

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Annie Trembath
F. Deane Morgan
A. W. Chaffey
K. M. Bell
V. Legge
Ethel Chown
Winifred Clarissa Shepheard
Constance Bedwell
Constance Clerk
M. M. Lyne
Esther G. Bell
E. Garrett
Winifred French
May Skardon
E. W. Westoby
Louisa Cunningham
Violet Vincent
Molly Peile
Norah M. Sturgeon

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.—Maud Francis Smith, Phyllis Dean Evens

HON. MENTION.—Ellen Darwin Fox, Lucy Lockett Ayers

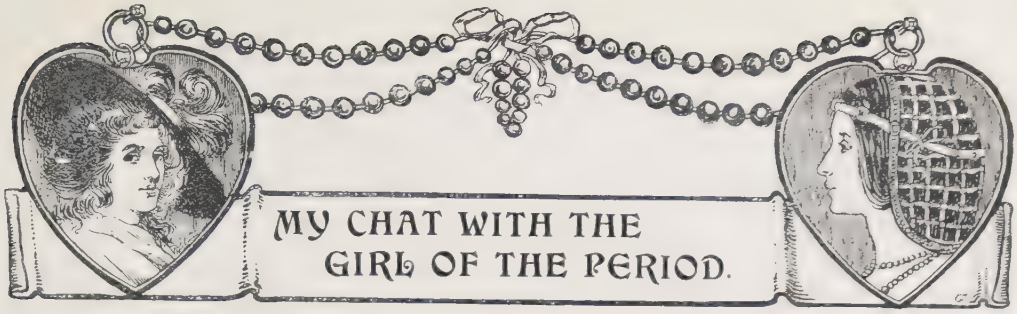
POEM COMPETITION.

DIPLOMAS.

Alice Grant Rosman
Constance A. Bedwell
Eveline D. Connell
M. Barry
C. Gwendoline Erskine
Claire Evelyn Mamelsdorf
Lucy Lockett Ayers
Norah Pickthall

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Irene Ridewood
Emily May Westoby
Edith Mary Pippet
Kathleen Bayliss
Vera Stuckey
Silvia Tatham
Esther G. Bell
Kathleen Margaret Bell
Nancy Pearson
Muriel Pyman



By ALICE CORKRAN.

A GIRL'S IDEALS.

My Dear Girls,—I have many letters from you. Some of you still write to me about your ideals in life, what you want to be and to do in the future. "Laura" and "Beatrix" wish to marry a great man; and "Mary," a dear little homely soul, wishes, if she never marries and never has children of her own, to take care of the little ones of other people. There is "Clotilde," who tells me—poor "Clotilde"—that she is deformed, and has "no chance" in this world, but who wants to make children happy—the poor children who have no parents or homes, properly speaking, of their own. Then there is "Lenora," who has other ideals, and thinks she can paint noble pictures; and "Louisa," who wants to be a novelist—a great novelist—one whose books will compel the chill world to listen to tales of suffering that will wring its heart and compel it to hearken and do something for the outcasts of life. The other day I was reading a charming article by Clara Laughlin in *Scribner's Magazine*, entitled "The Evolution of a Girl's Ideal," and there was much in it that made me think of my girls' letters. Miss Laughlin traces the history of her waking dreams since the time that she played with her dolls, until she came to see that abandonment, not acquisition, is the lesson we have to learn. She tells how she used to dread the day, with a "chill anguish" of apprehension, when her dolls would be taken from her, or she would be considered "too big" to play with them. We, too, remember the happy days when our dolls were all in all to us. I had one, Rosa by name; she was the confidante of my pleasures and of my sorrows, and, I am sorry to say, the bearer of my ill-humours. How she listened unmoved to the stories of my wrongs, contemplated with unabated and smiling equanimity the history of the grievances and injustices I was subjected to in this comedy-world! how she allowed herself to be buffeted with the same indifferent mien, and accepted with undaunted smiles my passionate embraces and repentances!

Then, after a while, our dolls gave way to more vivid dreams, and we fancied we cared for the little boy over the way, who came to tea to "stuff" himself with enormous quantities of cake. The writer of the article, being an American, was taught with boys, and fancied herself in love with the small comrade of her studies who sat beside her at her lessons. Sometimes, she tells us, they would go off into the park together. Ah! what dreams she had. She thought nothing less than that she and the small hero beside her would purchase the park, and build a house right in the middle of it, and row in swan-boats about the lake and feed the animals in the Zoo. On Sundays the people would be admitted, but there would be troops of mounted police, who would keep the crowd in order and allow it just to defile past in a humble and straightforward manner.

Yes, we have all had our dreams. Every one of us has had them when the passion and promise of life seemed to beckon us on, and we dreamt wild dreams of what awaited us, and acted to ourselves the part we would play. We have all dreamt our dreams; those who have not have lost something that nothing after in this world will supply. We have dreamt of being beautiful princesses, of wearing marvellous gowns. We have been carried off by some pirate chief, and had breathless adventures. We have been great novelists and painters and musicians. We have been the lode-star of some melancholy and delightful individual. Ah! dear day-dreams, we would not part with you, although we know abandonment is the law of life, the law by which we get to happiness.

The first heartbreak of the writer of the article came to her when she was eighteen. She was quite grown-up, her hair put up, her gown quite long, her lessons finished. It was the first of the great disillusions of her life. For some three years she loved a youth, "a knightly soul," who was tall and bronzed, a great athlete and a great scholar. She nourished her secret quite happily in her house of dreams. She would be devoted to him, she would provide the chocolate cakes that she discovered he was devoted to. She would be his soul's companion and share all tastes. She would write great novels; she would wear as she wrote a beautiful pale grey gown of perfect fit, and there would be a great bunch of violets on her study table, and she would have seven children, their names already chosen. Then there came to her the conviction that sorrow would claim some of her joy and success, and would insist upon having a place at her board. So she determined to sacrifice to it her youngest born, her little Lily. We have all had the intuition that the veiled figure would come and ask for

something, and that we would give it a dole and ask her to leave us the rest. We would kiss the hem of her garment as she took one from us, and ask her to be merciful. Then the young man returned, and Clara Laughlin tells us that she went forth to meet him clad in a manner to emphasise the fact that she was quite grown up, that she was ready to take her place by his side. She went forth and she met him, and he welcomed her with a cordial geniality of manner. He grasped her hand and then turned to another and seemed to forget her, and she went home and sunk upon her doorstep weeping bitterly. The knight scarcely knew of her existence. This was her first real heartbreak; the first time she recognised that she had stepped out of the world of dreams into the hard world of fact. It is in that lies the heartbreak, the recognition that we are out of the dream-world—that world where things are ordered as we wish them to be, where it matters little whether we are in rags, or stupid or ugly. We have a magic wand, and lo! we compel our dreams to obey our behests—and now our magic wand is taken from us and we are mastered by facts.

The "true knight" who eventually claimed Clara proved to be entirely different from what her ideal had been. For her ideal had all the physical endowments that go to make a hero of romance—he was "joy-giving," he brought her flowers and other offerings, he let her weep her troubles on his broad breast, whereas the one to whom she has given her troth never brings her a blossom, never listens to her weeping, he has no sense of the joy of existence, but a great distrust of all felicity as an arrest of development. And yet she tells us that putting in one balance all the things wherein the love he gave her differed from love as she yearned for it, and putting in the other all that he is to her which she cannot analyse or describe or dispense with, the latter far, far outweighs all the rest. Her happiness has come of giving up all that she had clung to, but it has left duty and self-sacrifice and the sense of allegiance to her religious ideal; and thus she addresses him who has taught her this:—

"And my house of dreams to-day? It hasn't a detail, in my mind, of location, or size, or trappings, so only you are in it! And Sorrow is in it, I know; not 'after many years,' either, but from the first, even as a household saint. And if there is a parlour it shall be furnished with Forbearance, for there we shall see the 'polite' world, which, whether one be glad or sad, is so alien that if it be accepted at all it can only be with forbearance. And the dining-room shall be furnished with Cheer, for there we shall gather, now and then, the chosen few we really love, and set before them our best refreshment of body and spirit, that they may fare forward the stronger therefore. And if there is a little 'den,' it shall be 'done' in Congeniality, for it will be mine and yours, your pipes and my embroidery lying down together in peace and harmony, like the lion and the lamb in the Apocalypse. And there shall be a large, upper chamber, with 'windows opening toward Jerusalem,' and it shall be made beautiful with Love, for there, when all things and all men shall have tried us, and we are sore beset and weary, we shall come together—all the world outside—and whether our hearts be sad or lightsome, whether the world vex us or we vex one another, we shall stand face to face, in the quiet, in the quiet, and look into each other's eyes, and laugh, and sob, and say, 'Yet Love remaineth! Yet Love remaineth!'

"Even so, my house of dreams!"

And if you, my dear girls, have to abandon what you set your hearts on, if you cannot write the great novel, paint the immortal picture, or win a first place for yourselves in the world of music, let your dreams go. You will know how wonderful is the path of life, and that your dreams filled your eyes so that you could not see it. Do not forget one thing in planning your house of dreams, and that is, that all the different apartments should be approached through the passage of reality. If not, the whole establishment will be in the piteous case of a certain house that was designed complete in all its parts with the exception of a staircase. It was perfect, but there was no getting from one room to another, and this dream of human relationship purely on the ideal plane has a most pressing danger. The art of arts is to pass through realities to idealisation, not through idealisation to realities. The latter is like putting the cart before the horse. Say what we will, every palace of dreams must have foundations; it must not be up in the clouds. The very first thing to do before we begin dreaming about our fellows is to see them, know them, love them, or, if it must be so, hate them as they are. All our idealisations must be fine flowers, springing out of the rich and loamy soil of truth and fact.

"MURIEL" writes to me drawing attention to the article on "The Dog's Love Tragedy," in the March number of THE GIRL'S REALM. "Do you think such performances are kind to animals? I read an article on this subject a short time ago and the writer said that animals could not be trained without cruelty, and that dogs are made to wear collars with sharp spikes inside."

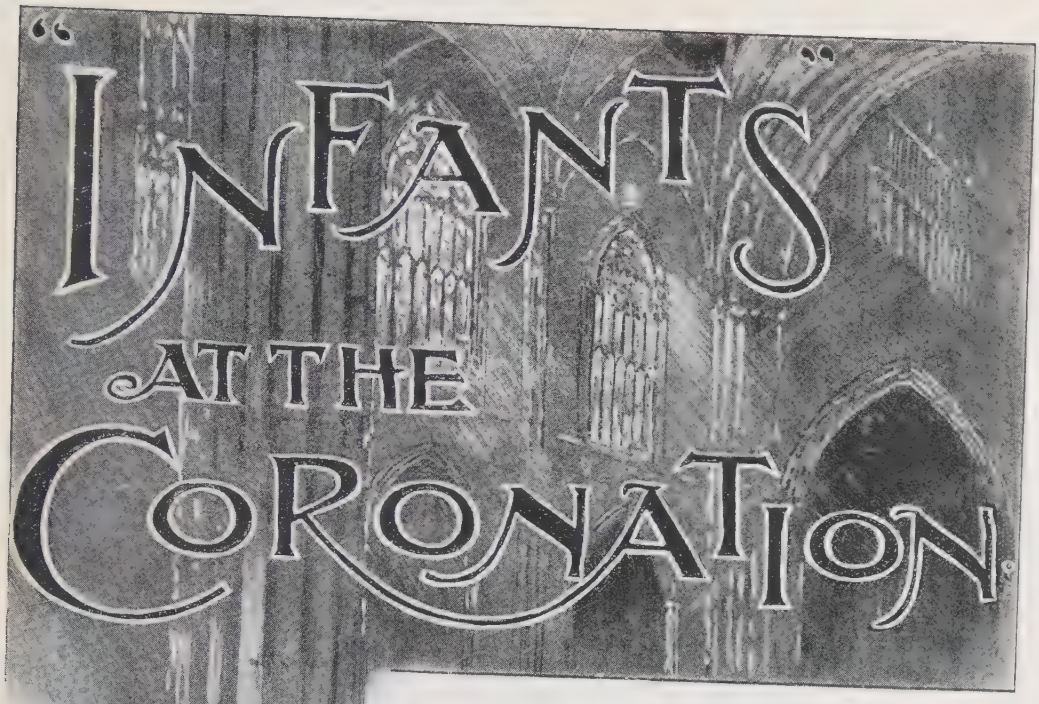
This is a subject that I have very much at heart. Some dogs are very clever and can be trained without cruelty by kind speeches and by recompense, but others are, I fear, ill-treated. I know that there is a great deal of horrible and unnecessary suffering in this world, and I wish that all girls would form a phalanx to put it down as far as is in their power.

I have a letter from "LAURA" on a similar subject. She writes: "I wish you would write against the horrible habit of wearing dead birds and aigrettes in hats and bonnets or in the hair. I cannot understand how women can be so cold-blooded as to deck themselves with aigrettes—that lovely tuft of feathers comes on some males' heads, and it must be torn from the bird alive."

All my sympathy goes with "MURIEL" and "LAURA." It is unwomanly and cruel to cause the murder of the bright rovers of the woods in order to wear their feathers. Those who thus deck themselves do not think of it perhaps, but it revolts the heart of those who remember and see them thus adorned. Ostrich feathers are quite different, to cut the tips of the splendid plumage of the ostrich is good for the animal, and causes it no discomfort.

There are many problems sent to me, but I cannot answer them to-day. And now, my dear girls, good-bye. I shall still speak to you monthly in our Chats, and I hope to hear from you constantly. Believe me, I am deeply interested in your ideals, your pleasures, your trials, your hopes and fears.

ALEXANDRA
EDWARD



"Infant" Peers and Peeresses whose duty and right it is to appear at the Coronation of King Edward VII.

By "CORONA."

Not the least interesting of the many events connected with the Coronation of Edward VII. will be the appearance in Westminster Abbey of the "infant" peers and peeresses, comprising one Duke, one Marquess, four Earls, four Viscounts, seven Barons, and two Baronesses, whose ages range from two to twenty. It is to be hoped that the more youthful among this little phalanx will comport themselves with becoming gravity, and not emulate the three-year-old King Alphonso XIII., who on the occasion of his first public appearance insisted on playing "bo-peep" with one of his Ministers, to the great confusion of the latter.

Place aux dames. The first on the list in point of youth is the tiny Baroness Clifton, the only child of the late Lord Darnley, who is just entering her third year. Consequently about this little lady there is not, as yet, very much to be said. On the death of her father, in 1900, she succeeded to the Barony of Clifton, which descends in the female line, the Earldom of Darnley having gone to her uncle, Mr. Ivo Bligh, the famous cricketer. The mother of Lady Clifton, Jemima Lady Darnley, who has just married again, was a member of the Dufferin family, and spent a good deal of her early life in Paris. She speaks several languages to perfection, and has just written a novel.

Baroness Beaumont, whose pretty name is Mona Josephine, was born in 1894, and in 1896, a year after the death of her father, the late Lord Beaumont (better known as "Miles Stapleton"), the Barony was called out of abeyance in her favour. Her birthday is in August, and she will consequently be within two months of attaining her eighth year at the time of the Coronation. Her only sister, Miss Ivy Stapleton, who was born a month after her father's death, is just a year younger.

Little Lady Beaumont is dark and her small sister is fair. Both are handsome children, and they make a very pretty contrast. They live almost entirely at Carlton Towers, York-

shire, and are both very fond of outdoor amusements and pursuits. Lady Beaumont hunts regularly, on a pony less than a yard high, and the two little sisters drive a diminutive tandem, handling the "ribbons" with much dexterity. Like most children whose lives are spent in the country, they possess innumerable pets, and are devoted to their rabbits, guinea-pigs, doves, pigeons, and dogs.

The first on the list of youthful peers is Vernon Henry St. John, sixth Viscount Bolingbroke. The bearer of this historical name has just completed his sixth year, as he was born in March, 1896. He succeeded his father, the fifth Lord Bolingbroke, in 1899.

The Earl of Airlie, who is nine years old, succeeded to the title at the age of seven. His father's tragic death at Diamond Hill, in South Africa, is still fresh in everbody's memory. The present head of the "Bonny House" is a fine little fellow, but the graver side of life presented so early to his mind by the circumstances of his succession and consequent responsibilities, have tended to make him older than his age. The young Earl is at school at Stone House, Broadstairs, known as the "House of Lords," on account of the many scions of great families who have been educated there. There exists in the Ogilvy family a legend to the effect that a drummer boy is heard beating a ghostly tattoo round the walls of Airlie Castle before the death of the head of the house. When the late Lord Airlie was killed the talk of the country side was that no one appeared to have heard the drum. On the other hand, the flag which was being run up on the flagstaff at Cortachy, stuck obstinately at half mast, and before it could be hoisted the tragic news of Lord Airlie's death had been received from South Africa. Lady Airlie, mother of the present peer, has recently been appointed Lady-in-Waiting to H.R.H. the Princess of Wales.

Photo. Esmé Collings, Hove.

THE BARONESS BEAUMONT, WITH HER SISTER, THE HON. IVY STAPLETON.

The little Baroness will attain her eighth birthday at the time of the Coronation.

John Evans-Freke, tenth Baron Carbery, is just ten years old, having been born in May, 1892, and succeeded to the family honours at the early age of six, on the death of his father, in 1898. The Evans family, although settled in Co. Cork, claim descent from a personage bearing the eminently Welsh name of Elystan Glodrydd, Prince of Fferlys. It is too early to predict what Lord Carbery's career will be, but his forbears chiefly distinguished themselves in politics, and he may prefer to follow in their footsteps rather than enter the Army or the Navy.

The Earl of Lisburne, who is another ten-year-old hereditary Legislator, having been born in February, 1892, succeeded his father as seventh Earl in 1899. Although Lord Lisburne is an Irish peer, the family estate, Crosswood, is in Cardiganshire, near Aberystwyth. The Vaughans are almost without a parallel for prolonged possession of their

original seat and estates, which are amongst the largest in Wales. The two last Lords Lisburne married sisters, as the sixth Earl, father of the present peer, became the husband of his stepmother's sister. These ladies were the daughters of Mr. Edmund Probyn, of Huntley Manor, and nieces of Sir Dighton Probyn, who is keeper of the King's Privy Purse, and *persona grata* with the Royal Family. Lord Lisburne has one sister, Lady Enid Evelyn Malet, who is now thirteen.

Viscount Exmouth, who is twelve years old, and succeeded his father as fifth Viscount in 1899, comes of a seafaring race, as befits a son of Devon. His ancestor, the first peer, was the famous Admiral Pellew, who captured the French frigate *Cleopatra*, and successfully bombarded Algiers in 1816. Athough his immediate predecessors had abandoned the Navy for the Army, it is rather to be hoped that the present peer will adopt a career in which his forbears have so distinguished themselves. Lord Exmouth spent the earlier years of his life at Powderham, Lord Devon's magnificent property near Exeter, which is rented by Mrs. Pellew Bradshaw, Lord Exmouth's grandmother. He is a good-looking boy, with a charming disposition, and has one sister, Miss Cicely Pellew, who is sixteen years old, and very pretty. Canonteign, the seat of the Pellews, is a beautiful place near Exeter.

Photo. Speaight.

THE BARONESS CLIFTON.

The tiny Peeress will be the youngest of all at the Coronation, for she is only three years old.

Lord Vernon, eighth Baron of that name, is fourteen years of age, having been born in 1888, and came into his kingdom on the death of his father in 1898. He is a fair-haired, blue-eyed lad, rather delicate, and with a face thoughtful beyond his years. Nevertheless he is fond of all boyish pursuits, and is specially devoted to cricket. He is at present at school at Stone House, Broadstairs. Lord Vernon will be very wealthy one day, as he is the owner of extensive coal pits in Cheshire. Sudbury Hall, his beautiful place near Derby, which is let until its youthful master comes of age, is a splendid old Elizabethan mansion. It boasts the longest gallery in England, going the whole length of the house, and a wide oak staircase. The fine park is full of deer, which live in peace and amity with a herd of Shetland ponies, the little animals looking most picturesque as they scamper over the broad green turf. Lord Vernon owns another property in Cheshire,

Poynton Towers, which is situated among the coal pits.

The first Earl of Macclesfield was an eminent lawyer in the reign of Queen Anne. What the seventh will be it is at present difficult to prognosticate, as he is only fourteen years of age. He succeeded his grandfather—a personage who, among other claims to distinction, had a family of eleven sons and three

Photo. W. A. Cadby.

VISCOUNT TORRINGTON.

Who has been a Page of Honour in two reigns. He is seen standing by the chair of his ancestor, the ill-fated Admiral Byng.

daughters—in 1896. The present peer's grandmother was a sister of the first Duke of Westminster, and was for some time Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Alexandra, when Princess of Wales. The Macclesfield estate, Shirburn Castle, near Wallingford, is a magnificent place.

Viscount Combermere, of Bhurtpore, in the East Indies, and Combermere in the County Palatine of Chester, will complete his fifteenth year during the Coronation week, as he was born on the 29th of June, 1887. He succeeded his father in 1898, and is being educated at Harrow. Combermere Abbey, his beautiful place near Whitchurch, is at present let to Catherine, Duchess of Westminster, who is likely to prove an excellent tenant, as she has already made extensive alterations and improvements. Lord Combermere counts a distinguished soldier among his forbears, the first Lord Combermere having been raised to the rank of a Baron, in 1814, for his brilliant services during the Peninsular War. Thirteen years afterwards he was advanced to the dignity of Viscount for the capture of Bhurtpore. Hence the reason of this name following the title.

Lord Somers, who was born in 1887, is fifteen years of age, and succeeded his great uncle in 1899. He is being educated at Mulgrave Castle, Lord Normanby's school. His family, an old Kentish one, dates from the reign of Edward I. His father, Captain Herbert Somers-Cocks, formerly in the Coldstream Guards, and his mother, who was Miss Blanche Clogstoun, daughter of Major Herbert Clogstoun, V.C., both died on the same day (26th of December), within one year of each other. Lord Somers, who is a particularly charming boy, bright and intelligent, unfortunately possesses no estate.

The only Duke on our list is the young Duke of Leinster, who succeeded to his great name and vast estates at the early age of six, and is now in his sixteenth year. He has something of the chiselled features which his father had inherited from the Sutherlands, and much of his mother's good looks. There can be but few of us who are not familiar with the pictures at least of that lovely woman, the late Duchess of Leinster, whose death in the zenith of her youth and beauty, and in the first year of her widowhood caused such universal regret. From his mother the Duke has unfortunately inherited a certain delicacy of constitution, which, last year, necessitated his being taken away from Eton, and sent abroad with his uncle by marriage, Sir Edgar Vincent. He usually spends his holidays at Carton, the Leinster family place in Maynooth.

The family of the Geraldines, or Fitzgeralds,

Photo. Kissack, Eton.

THE YOUNG DUKE OF LEINSTER.

Who will be the only Boy-Duke at the Coronation.

Photo. Lafayette.

VISCOUNT HOLMPATRICK.

Who has been invited by the King to attend the Coronation in the uniform of the Eton volunteers.

as they are now called, is said to have sprung from the Gherardini, a noble family of Florence. An ancient tower still exists in that city on which the arms of the Gherardini are seen to be exactly similar to those borne by the Dukes of Leinster. The Fitzgeralds have the proud distinction of quartering their arms with no one, and bear upon their shield only the Crusader's Cross. The crest, a monkey, has for its traditional origin the fact that the child of the first Earl of Kildare—Kildare is now the second title of the Leinsters—was left behind in the confusion occasioned by a fire at Woodstock Castle, and was rescued by a tame ape.

Viscount Torrington, who has been a Page of Honour in two reigns, as he was appointed in that capacity to Queen Victoria, in 1899, is sixteen years of age. He belongs to an ancient family of Kent, whose honours only date, however, from 1721, when Admiral Byng, who had been knighted in the reign of Queen Anne, was raised to the peerage. The present peer is the ninth Viscount Torrington, and succeeded to the title in 1889. He was sent, when seven years old, to a dame's school at Folkestone, and from his tenth to his thirteenth year was at Stone House, Broadstairs. He is now at Eton, in Mr. Benson's house. Lord Torrington was one of the

Photo. Bassano.

THE EARL OF MACCLESFIELD.

A fourteen-year-old Peer who will enjoy the Coronation Ceremony

two pages in waiting at the last State opening of Parliament, and looked well in his charming costume of crimson and gold, with the lace tie, shoulder knot of white ribbon, and white silk knee-breeches. Lady Torrington, the mother of the present peer, was Miss St. Maur, daughter of the Reverend Henry St. Maur. Yotes Court, the family estate is situated near Maidstone.

Photo. Elliott & Fry.

THE EARL OF LISBURNE.

A ten-year-old hereditary legislator.

Hans Wellesley, second Baron Holmpatrick, was born at Abbotstown, co. Dublin, in 1886, and succeeded his father in 1898. His first school was at Mortimer, Hants, and he subsequently went to a preparatory school at Westgate-on-Sea, from whence he was transferred to Eton. Lord Holmpatrick is now sixteen years of age. He is very fond of country pursuits and out-door sports, going in specially for cricket and football. Lord Holmpatrick numbers the Iron Duke among his forbears on his mother's side, as Lady Holmpatrick was a Wellesley, sister of the third and fourth Dukes of Wellington, and granddaughter of the hero of Waterloo. Lord Holmpatrick has been invited to the Coronation with one of his sisters, and will, in place of a peer's robes and coronet, wear his uniform as private in the Eton Volunteers.

LORD SOMERS, WITH HIS SISTER, THE HON. A. V. I. SOMERS-COCKS.

The Earl of Caledon is seventeen years of age, and succeeded his father in

1898. Lord Caledon is destined for a military career, and will probably enter the 1st Life Guards, which was his father's old regiment. He is fond of shooting and hunting, and all pursuits beloved of boys. The Alexanders all bear Scandinavian names such as Eric, Herbrand, Harold, and Sigismund. Lord Caledon's principal place is Caledon, co. Tyrone, but he also possesses an English estate, Tyttenhanger Park, in Hertfordshire.

Lord de Clifford, twenty-fifth Baron, who is within a month or two of completing his eighteenth year, is at this moment at a private tutor's, and will eventually enter the Royal Horse Guards Blue. He was christened "Jack," a somewhat unusual name to receive at baptism, and by it he is more generally known than by his title. Lord de Clifford possesses a property in Leicestershire, Kirkby Mallory, and when not engaged in pursuing his studies, makes his home with his aunt, Miss Maud Russell, sister of the late Lord de Clifford. The family is of great antiquity, the first Baron, who was killed at Bannockburn, having been created in 1299.

Lord Camoys, who has attained the respectable age of eighteen, is the head of the Stonor family, an ancient Roman Catholic house, and was educated at the Oratory, Edgbaston. One of his ancestors, Sir Thomas de Camoys, was an eminent warrior in the time of Richard II., and commanded the left wing of the army at Agincourt. The Stonor family have always been a great deal about the Court. The fifth Lord Camoys was Lord-in-Waiting to Queen Victoria, and the father of the present peer held a similar post near her late Majesty. His aunt, the late Mrs. Stonor, a daughter of the great Sir Robert Peel, was long Bedchamber woman to Queen Alexandra, when Princess of Wales, and her Majesty always showed her much friendship and regard.

The Marquess of Conyngham, who is also the possessor of about a dozen other titles besides, is nineteen years of age, having been born in 1883, and succeeded his father, in 1897. The Conynghams, as their name indicates, were of Scotch origin, but settled in Ireland towards the beginning of the seventeenth century, one, Alexander Conyngham, a Protestant minister, having migrated to Donegal, where the family still possess a good deal of property. Slane Castle, where the Conynghams have chiefly lived, is, however, in Meath. The mother of the present peer was an Irishwoman, one of the beautiful De Moleyns, daughters of Lord Ventry, of whom the others are Lady Hopetoun, Lady Acland Hood, and Mrs. Gretton.

Baron O'Hagan, although in law an "infant," as he does not come of age until February next, can hardly be numbered among the "boy peers," as he has just completed his twentieth year. He is a Roman Catholic, and comes of a distinguished legal family, his father having twice been Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Lord O'Hagan is one of the many younger sons whom the war has elevated to the position of heads of families, as he succeeded his brother, the late Lord O'Hagan, who died last year in South Africa, at the age of twenty-two. Lord O'Hagan is studious and quiet in his tastes. He is very fond of travelling, being seldom at home.

The Thumb Chronicle of Silly Boy Headstrong.

By MARIE VAN VORST.

Illustrated by W. H. MARGETSON.

"MISTRESS DOLLY LATHROP STOOD NEAR TO THE WILD ROSE BUSH AND FROM UNDER HER SUN-BONNET SHE LAUGHED—OH, BUT SHE LAUGHED!"—(*p.* 704.)

My memories, as they surround Silly Boy Headstrong, take me back to a time of war.

This was one of the saddest pages of war-like chronicle—the fighting of two nations born of one branch, speaking the same tongue. I speak of the American Revolution in the year 1776.

But even out of the thorn-and-thistle times of war, good springs like a rose, in the form of valour. Brave acts and heroic spirits make holy moments in the blackest hour. There is not a fibre in us that does not thrill to courage, and in the little boy whom my memories crown there was not a fibre not valiant, or a voice that was not for honour.

England of Silly Boy Headstrong's time was at war with her Colonies—now the American United States—and Long Island, a strip of land near New York City, played an important part in the Revolution.

Part of the time in the possession of the insurgents, part of the time in British possession, the poor little island was torn and stripped, as if it had been ravaged and pillaged. The time of the narrative is about 1776.

Silly Boy's father, Captain Acton, was in command of a regiment of troops stationed in New York City.

Here, with his wife, the lovely Mistress Acton, his baby daughter Rosamund, and his adventuresome little son, he occupied a house overlooking New York Harbour. The curious name of Silly Boy Headstrong must be touched upon. It was because of the different ways his parents regarded him. Whenever he put forth one of his droll observations his mother would exclaim, gently (with her little laugh behind the words):—

"*Oh, silly boy!*" And whenever his small iron will was set against his father's big iron will, Captain Acton would frown darkly, "*Headstrong!*"

Once, after a difference of opinion between the young man and this same tall military father, in which, of course, Captain Acton came off victor, and Silly Boy liked him the better for it—liked him? nay, loved him tenderly, even though he was stifling his tears and mortification under the

bed-clothes in his own small room; once he heard *them* talking—those two, the fair Lady of the Shining Hair and white 'kerchief, and the tall gentleman of the blue coat and the brass buttons. Captain Acton, his hands in his pockets, was striding up and down in his high boots. (Silly Boy knew how! He tried to walk that way himself; just the gentleman's difference between a stalk and a swagger!) Mother was sitting by her spinning-wheel, the firelight red upon her cheek.

"Remember, Henry," the Shining Lady said to Silly Boy's father, "he is only a silly boy!"

"If I knew of a good tutor!" came the voice, warm with the glow of the late difference. "If I knew of a good school!"

"Mistress Chatfield," suggested she.

"Fiddlesticks, Molly!" the Captain stamped. "Mistress, indeed! A woman! Send that boy to a woman! He is too headstrong. Grammercy! Too strong even for me!"

The walking stopped here. Silly Boy heard the wheel move and the chair scrape on the sanded floor. Mother's skirts rustled, and he heard her softly say: "Remember, too, he comes well by it."

Silly Boy, touched by the softness and drawn with love, raised himself on his elbow in bed, and looked through from his dark room into the bright saloon beyond. Father had his arm about Mother of the Shining Hair, and she was touching his cheek, even as sometimes she touched Silly Boy's, and father was smiling again.

"A headstrong youngster," he said, but a smile changed the words.

"No, dearest, only a silly boy to set his will against thine."

"A headstrong son to thee and me, Molly." Father's face grew dark again.

"If so—loyally got, that free will, Henry; it is so like thine. Remember!"

"Silly Boy Headstrong," laughed Captain Acton, and he put his hand on the Shining Hair, "may the love that has helped me to tame my wild will help you too!"

And the next event was the day of the letter from his grandfather. Silly Boy was making a new mast for his ship, sitting deep in the settle of the window that looked out on New York Bay and Harbour.

"Father is very lonely in the Gate House at Easthampton," said Mrs. Acton. "He will be glad if we can go to him for Christmas-time."

"I cannot leave the city at present," said Captain Acton. "Your father should come to New York."

"But he writes: 'The long, severe journey in winter for one of my age is not to be attempted.'"

Captain Acton was reading his own mail, breaking red and black seals and unfastening the strings on little packets that had come all the way from England, after weeks on the stormy ocean. He did not reply.

Silly Boy Headstrong pressed his face against the window-casing, and looked where the ships rocked at anchor and the blue water lay like sheets of glass between the floating ice blocks. He dreamed of many things, just what he could not tell. His soul was made for adventure. That "long journey in winter"—"not to be attempted"—and the "Gate House." Why! the Gate House was in the wilderness! The very word "wilderness" was full to him of charm. He sprang down from his seat with a spring that made the Captain start from his perusal of a letter.

"Mother!" said Silly Boy, standing before her. "Let me go!"

"What wind now?" asked the father, sharply.

"Go where, Silly Boy?" Mistress Acton put her hand on his arm and drew him to her side.

"To Grandfather Wharton, who is lonely; to —to——"

"Well, to what, youngster?"

"To explore, to fight the British and the Indians and the brigands, to watch for pirates, to protect Grandfather."

Silly Boy's father stared at him. Then he looked as though he were about to break into a peal of laughter; something stopped it.

"What dost thou mean, my son?"

"Grandfather has told me of the black ships that sail quite near to Sag Harbour, of the Indians as well, and thou knowest the British are encamped near to Easthampton. I should like to protect him." Master Headstrong held out his right arm.

"Oh, Silly Boy!" murmured Mother of the Shining Hair.

"Hush, Molly!" said Captain Acton. "It is the best—the rarest yet! There are no lads to play thy games there, no shops for sweets, no gay sights like hereabouts, nor Mother," continued the Captain, "nor me."

"I know," said Silly Boy.

"Henry," remonstrated Mistress Acton, "have done, dearest!"

"Nay, but I am in deep earnest." The Captain laid aside his packet of letters, and taking the arms of Silly Boy in both his hands, "Here is muscle and sinew and nerve and will. What, my son! A will? I like thy spirit! Odds truth! 'Protect the weak and seek adventure?' You

shall go to the Gate House. The coach is for to-morrow week, and (as chance has it, Molly) Major Wainwright and another are going to the Island's very end. They shall escort your boy to his grandfather's."

Mistress Acton wrote to her father, Major Wharton, a letter that an extra post carried with mail of greater import to Easthampton. The letter reached the Gate House before Silly Boy did, and prepared for the grandson such a welcome! At his daughter's accounts love brightened the old major, shone in his eyes, and made him laugh and cry almost.

When Silly Boy arrived the old gentleman was standing in the low doorway, in spite of the biting cold, his head high, his martial form straight as a young man's. He wore a blue coat and yellow waistcoat, ruffled shirt and black stock. One leg and foot was in a black silk stocking and silver-buckled shoe. The other leg was wooden below the knee.

Major Wainwright, the young American officer who had escorted Silly Boy from New York, rode up in front of the Gate House over the crunching snow. Before he could quite draw rein Silly Boy had slipped, like an eel, from the front of his saddle to the ground. Wainwright saluted, and the old officer returned.

"I have brought you a future Father of his Country—a notable person, Major Wharton," said the major, "Master Silly Boy Headstrong."

"My grandson and I are already old friends. I thank you for your courteous escort."

"Nay, I am the debtor," laughed the younger. "Ninety miles with him in company were half their length! (He quieted his impatient horse.) You are alone here, Major Wharton?"

"Save for my servant." Major Wainwright gave a quick look at the bush, stretching its forest far and wide.

"And the enemy is not far away, I learn. Isn't it imprudent?"

"I am armed. And I have a protector." The old man placed his hand on his grandson's shoulder.

"Oh, *that* I grant you, sir; young Acton's a man of mettle! Well, good-night to you! I am late for my rendezvous. Farewell, Don Quixote." He stooped and gave the boy his gloved hand, then, rising in his saddle, he made a low bow to them both, clucked to his mare, and rode away.

In front of Major Wharton's low grey cottage near Easthampton, Long Island, stretched a "bush." It stretched to right and left and far away, for miles and miles. Green as emerald in summer-time, brown as dust in winter. Over this sweep of Long Island moor the boy saw the suns go down, red as blood, and early morning throw their beautiful mists. At the back of the house was a meadow, pink and purple with iris to the lake's edge. In an inlet of the lake he kept his raft "Explorer"—named with great pomp, Grandfather Wharton assisting.

Across the lake, straight across its intense blue, stretched a yellow sand-bar like an arm of gold. Beyond it was the sea. Standing just in the middle of his not-always-to-be-trusted raft, the navigator voyaged along the lake shore, down its centre sweep, within full tempting sight of the Shining Bar. One of his projects was to run the raft high up on the sand-bank and strand her there, hasten home, and (surreptitiously, be it confessed) ride the Straggler—his grandfather's old grey horse—bare-back through the fields and woods, ploughing him hock-deep in the sand up to the raft, hitch him to the vessel (!)—his raft—and draw her to the sea's edge! There he would launch her, man her, and sail to the glorious ports of the world, of which he knew so little and dreamed so much. Meanwhile, what would become of the Straggler, gaunt and grey and lean-flanked? (That decision he grandly waived.) Possibly the Straggler would become a sea-horse and delightfully follow him over-seas! More likely, he would sadly retrace his footsteps to the grey house, and the return of the old horse would be the only news to Grandfather Wharton of Silly Boy Headstrong's voyage.

It was this care for his grandfather that long kept Silly Boy Headstrong from carrying out his immortal scheme. Even the Straggler, quietly munching his oats, knew nothing about it—quite as well, perhaps, for it might have spoiled his digestion. *He* had an iron-grey sense of duty!

Our hero could have stood up before you to his sturdy height and counted off on the fingers of his brown muscular little hand the great events of his life.

The fourth finger: "Finding the pirate's treasure on the Wainscot shore." Third finger: "The visit to Captain Carhardt at the British camp." Second finger: "The fires of the North Woods." First finger: "How he sailed with his raft the 'Explorer' to France."

"The Thumb Chronicle" is our first story.

Docking these events off, Headstrong wondered: "*What*, *what* should start off the history of the *left* hand?" What, indeed? You see, he was already a "Boy's Book of Adventure, complete in five chapters," and as his mind flashed

"SILLY BOY HEADSTRONG DROPPED UPON ONE KNEE, AND RAISING UP THE FOWLING-PIECE, DISCHARGED IT FULL AT THE MAN WHO BLOCKED UP THE OPEN DOORWAY."—(*p.* 706.)

over the exciting events a very highly illustrated volume the short life appeared.

In the month that followed, Master Headstrong made, according to his own good pleasure and dearest wish, his map of the surrounding country. In reality, twelve miles away to the left was the town of Southampton, where many British soldiers were stationed; to the right, three miles away, ran the "Street," as the town of Easthampton was curiously called.

Between the village and his grandfather's dwelling was but one house, deep in the forest, and to reach it was a scramble, a fight with close-growing bushes, a clever finding of the way, a very *good* chance of losing one's bearings, and not finding anything but bush for ever, and being finally altogether out of the line, and launched well toward the Great North Woods.

Here in the little house dwelt Mistress Lathrop and her daughter, Dorothy. But Silly Boy ignored these practical bearings.

The bush to him was a mighty wilderness, sinister with Redskins and always full of marauding squads of British soldiers. The Lathrops' house was a pirates' stronghold, and never far away encamped the enemy.

Even when he went to Mistress Lathrop's on some errand from his grandfather he went armed cap-à-pie, a helmet on his head (fashioned from Agatha, the cook's, discarded pan), tied under his chin with strings. The handle of an old fencing-foil fitted to a birch-rod was his sword; a yellow waistcoat of his grandfather's, faded and stained, he adjusted for a breastplate. Thus, dodging shadow foes, boldly leaping hedges and passing hiding-places, he made the perilous journey of two miles.

As for the fine old gentleman of the wooden leg, he saw and knew more of these adventures than his grandson dreamed. His keen eyes, needing no glasses to help their sight, watched the boy start off as a pirate, splashing boot-top high in the marshes, bound for "Explorer." But the first time that the bold knight set forth, tin-pan crowned, waistcoat-shirted, and foil-armed, the old gentleman was weak with laughter! He shook as he sat in the window hidden from view, and Agatha, stealing in from the kitchen to catch a peep herself, found her master half-weeping with mirth.

"Bless my soul!" (Major Wharton caught his side with his hand.) "It has given me a crick in the back!"

Unconscious of onlookers, Silly Boy sallied out to roam the wild forest. Across the path ran the brown rabbits, white cottontails flashing through the green! The quails called "Bob White, Bob White!" from the cover; and birds, too wild to know him for anything but forest-born like themselves, brushed his cheek with their low-flying wings.

But the boy who left the Gate House in armour appeared in the commonplaceness of all boys at the Lathrops'. For before he came in sight of the honeysuckle-covered house Silly Boy Headstrong always doffed helmet, stripped his waistcoat, and hid all with his sword behind a clump of bushes. Not for the world would he have appeared thus armed before Dolly Lathrop.

"Do you never wear a cap, Master Acton?" Mistress Lathrop put her hand on the fair uncovered head.

"Indeed he does at church, do you not?" nodded Dolly.

"And in winter," said Silly Boy, "but in summer-time"—he looked up at the hot, bright air—"it is not always needful."

Little Miss Lathrop soon knew why Silly Boy came bare-headed to their door.

On a day of days in midsummer the battle of Bunker Hill was being re-fought in imagination by a fevered general single-handed against the foe. Silly Boy Headstrong was exhausted. He had been fighting, without remission for at least ten minutes, still manfully "whacking" and belaying the bush, lunging at trees, crying, "Rally, boys, once more for freedom!" when a peal of laughter, sweet as startling, made him stop with raised sword, his heated face turned toward the sound. Mistress Dolly Lathrop, in a fresh print frock, stood near to the wild rose bush, and from under her sun-bonnet she laughed—oh, but she laughed!—pealing forth, clapping her hands in amusement.

Master Headstrong wished he had fallen early in the fight.

"Oh, prithee, Master Acton, go on. Do not stop. *Oh! oh!*"

Silly Boy reddened with a deeper flush than war brought. He dropped his sword slowly, his hand loosened upon it and it fell. He untied the yellow waistcoat from behind and threw it after the sword; then he untied the strings under his chin, took off the tin pan and threw it down upon the ground. Dolly's laugh subsided to giggles. She whispered, "I fear I have spoiled your game."

"Oh, no!" he said, stoutly, shaking his strong little figure, and settling his disordered dress. "Oh, no! The skirmish was ended, the enemy was fleeing." He came slowly up to her side, possessed of a dignity that calmed the little girl's mirth.

"I have come too far into the forest." She turned homeward.

"May I show you the way out?" asked Silly Boy. He tramped at her side.

"Why, yes!" she said. "Thank you."

Together they went through the tangled bush paths back to the Lathrops', Dolly shaking behind her sun-bonnet every now and then with the remembrance of Silly Boy and the helmet, but not once did she laugh aloud.

Silly Boy went back alone, carefully avoiding the spot where his discarded accoutrements lay. He never saw them again. The sun shone on them, and the rains and suns fell on these objects which had suddenly become toys.

Then Silly Boy Headstrong thrilled for real weapons, that should seal him to manhood and forbid a smile.

"Grandfather, I want to discharge the fowling-piece." (He was forbidden to touch it even.)

"It will bowl you over like a ten-pin."

Silly Boy looked at it full. "*That* may be, sir! I should rather it knocked me down than be *afraid* of it *untried*."

"Um!" said his grandfather. "You are too slight for it, my son. Leave it alone. Mark you, Henry! I forbid it!"

Silly Boy frowned and stormed within. The word "forbid" was match to fire with him. "Grandfather!" Silly Boy confronted the old gentleman. He had his mother's brow over Captain Acton's flashing eyes. "Grandfather!"

"Well; have on!"

"*I must fire her, sir!*"

Major Wharton put down the book he was engaged in reading. Silly Boy stood, legs apart, before him, head high and will, holding the pretty chin up.

"You *must*, Headstrong?"

"Yes, sir. I must know a gun as a man knows it! I must be prepared, grandfather!"

"For what?"

"Marauders, robbers, the British!" flashed Headstrong.

"Rubbish!" twinkled the old man from his bright eyes. "When the British attack us you shall fire her. Sail your craft or, rather, take a swim, firebrand; it will cool you!"

Silly Boy bit his red lip. "I can't promise, grandfather."

"To swim?"

"No, no, sir!—not to touch the fowling-piece!"

"You *shall* fire the gun, Henry." His grandfather met his glowing look steadily.

"Grandfather! Oh, when?"

"When you have learned the first lesson of a soldier——"

"What's that, sir?"

"Obedience."

The pretty chin fell toward Master Headstrong's ruffled collar. He turned on his heel, and with his father's carriage of head and body, went slowly from the room, one sentence persistently sounding itself over and over to his desire—"*When the British attack us, Henry, you may fire her.*" As for the word "*obedience*," it went into his conscience, but slipped away from the present need.

These devoted companions of the Gate House spoke not at all of fear. Headstrong longed for a look at a Britisher! He strained his sight in the forests until redcoats danced before his eyes; indeed, he asked nothing better than to meet the whole British Army, from general to sutler, and felt in his stout soul ready to cope with them all. If the old major had any misgivings he did not tell them to his grandson, and even the day that saw the servant start away in the chaise behind the old grey horse to Sag Harbour for a day and a night found them in peace.

Silly Boy's imaginings, like most people's indeed, were founded on facts. Small camps of the British were scattered all over the island, and marauding acts of straggling soldiers were startlingly frequent.

The cause of his servant's journey hurt the dignity of the major. *He had broken his wooden leg*, snapped it off short just below the knee, and Agatha took it to the "Harbour" to have it mended. The old gentleman was therefore helpless and a prisoner to his bed, and thus grandfather and grandson came upon the night of the Thumb Chronicle.

It was a night in warm midsummer, darkened by a light-falling rain and drifting sea mists. Silly Boy lay awake on his pillow. The rain, scattering, pattering, singing in "the bush," helped to keep him awake awhile. The rabbits were safe in their burrows, the quail deep underneath shelter, he knew. And he dozed until the rustling and shaking of the honeysuckle in the wind and rain nearly rustled and whispered into his dreams.

A deeper sound than rain on the leaves made him open his eyes wide. In the bush's near edge he heard the sound of stealthy moving. It needed only a moment's bent forward listening to convince Master Headstrong that there were persons near, and with the still caution of the backwoodsman he slipped out of bed and ran to the window.

The intruders were not so noiseless as he. All five of them armed, great strapping men, high-booted, hats pulled low over their faces; they were coming straight toward the Gate House.

Armed and prepared, Headstrong had looked for them for months. Now in the night they stole upon him and found him unprepared! Two had already come to the window of the living-room and tried the fastenings. They were unyielding. The situation shaped itself clearly before Silly Boy Headstrong. He was alone with his grandfather, who could not move without his wooden leg; but the ponderous fowling-piece was a third to be counted on, and he believed it the best of all. He might touch it now. He felt his permission had come to him without question. *They were attacked by the British!* Oh, if the regular snore of the sleeping gentleman upstairs would only go evenly on!

Agile and noiseless, Silly Boy slipped from the window through the living-room to the stairs and seized the fowling-piece. Fortune favoured him. Major Wharton, dreaming of Indian wars, did not wake to the real present, and his grandson, bearing the mighty forbidden weapon, staggered downstairs and placed himself in the middle of the room behind an old loom for shelter.

You see, Major Wharton had led his troops through many an engagement. Now in his old age he was sleeping the sleep of the just, and letting youthful blood stir for him. He had slept through crackling, rattling thunderstorms before, and in his somewhat disturbed slumber he thought these blows and poundings and rattlings were part of a midsummer storm.

Meanwhile youthful blood was indeed stirring to protect him. Silly Boy quivered with excitement. The British were before him—or nearly. Truth to say, more nearly than he frankly cared to entertain them — single handed! Nor fool, nor coward, he saw his danger, and confronted it as his countrymen have always confronted their foes.

Crack!

A keen eye without had seen a figure through the window. Over Silly Boy's head, through the loom, snipped a bullet. He did not raise his fowling-piece to his shoulder as yet.

"I may lift it once, not more: it is so heavy. And if it 'bowl me over like a ten-pin' I am lost. *I will wait till the door breaks!*" So he stood with the weapon at his side. The brightness, for him, was rather worn from glory. To be here in the dark in his night clothes, with an unwieldy weapon! He did not feel that they had met him fairly.

"*If* I can trust her!" he said to himself of his gun, as though he were an old military. "If she is surely loaded and I can manage to pull the trigger!" The door would soon be no shield between the young Republican and the enemy.

Pound! pound! split! smash!

A happy thought came to Silly Boy. "Why should the enemy believe him to be all alone?" Happy thought! Forthwith he called aloud in a ringing, fearless voice, as if upon his comrades to aid him: "Come on Peter, James, Thomas! Are you ready? Give them fire! He dropped upon one knee, and raising up the fowling-piece discharged it full at the man who now blocked up the open doorway.

There was an exclamation, a cry, a hush, and a sudden scattering retreat. *Silly Boy alone had put the whole combined force to flight!* The old gun's retrieve had bowled the young hero over like a ten-pin indeed! He sprawled upon the floor; but the enemy—the echo of the one shot scarcely dead—took to its several heels!

Old Major Wharton, fully awake, had been calling several seconds, and adding to the deception that there *was* a house full of men! Now he peered out of the window near his bed and saw the hasty figures running briskly away through the bush, bearing in their midst a wounded comrade, and thanking their stars that "James, Thomas, and Peter" were not firing on their retreat!

Then Silly Boy: "Yes, sir! Coming, grandfather! Glorious victory! Routed 'em at first volley! No, sir; not so much as a scratch! And it's quite true we *were* attacked by the British you see!" and he toiled painfully upstairs.

And thus the Thumb Chronicle ends. For the others—how he found the pirates' treasure on the Wainscot shore, how he visited Captain Carhardt in the British camp, how he fought the forest fires, and how the "Explorer" sailed to France—they must come later.

Girls and Girl-Life in the Royal Academy and New Gallery.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

Illustrated from Photographs of the Pictures by H. Dixon and Sons.

The Royal Academy celebrates girlhood in the pictures by Mr. Sargent. In two great groups, of three sisters each, that of the Ladies Alexandra, Mary and Theo Acheson, and that of the Misses Hunter, he shews us girls, gay, radiant and queenly. The Ladies Acheson in their animation and grace, the Misses Hunter in their abundant and intellectual charm, reign triumphant over the famed exhibition that yearly gathers the best of pictorial art in England. How I wish I could make you conjure up for yourselves these two magnificent canvases. The Ladies Acheson in white, a white cloud behind them, above them luxuriant boughs of an orange tree. One sister is gathering the fruit, her face illumined by a smile, the open smile of happy girlhood. Another sister is seated, and receives in her lap the golden treasures; her arms are slightly rounded, as she gathers the oranges in her over-dress, the white satin flowing over her knees. Her face is sensitive, a delicate gravity is stamped upon every charming feature. At the other side stands another sister, tall and slender, her voluminous white draperies are touched with black. About her personality is an air of great refinement and reserve. In another room are the "Misses Hunter" seated on a couch; their heads, crowned with brown hair, are drawn close together, their long arms are lightly interlaced; two in black, and one in white. The ample-folds of their dresses lie about their feet. The unconquerable fascination of girlhood is in their sweet faces and pliant figures.

MADONNA. BY MELTON FISHER.
(By special permission of the artist, who retains copyright of the picture.)

Types of English maidens are these sisters, gay, affectionate, to be confided in, yet with an aloofness in their carriage, a certain indefinable simplicity in their expression, a certain suggestion of dependence for all their happy fearlessness. Not far off there is another portrait of an English girl, Lady Marjorie Manners, by Shannon. The face is turned in profile, her dusky hair falls about her milk-white neck, her pure and child-like features are beautifully moulded, but it is in her eyes we feel that the witchery of her fascination lies, dreamy eyes that give us a hint of the fairy gardens of her soul. There is another portrait in another gallery, "Rachel," by H. T. Wells, true type of an English girl, happy, wholesome-hearted, fresh, and rosy.

LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.

BY FRANK DICKSEE, A.R.A.

Now let us see the girls the poets have dreamt of and sung. "La belle dame sans merci" is painted by Frank Dicksee. All the fantasy of Keat's poem is here. The great woodland expanse with the sun just setting behind a mighty boulder, the tangle of wild roses in the foreground, telling of kindred blossoms in the fragrant distant woods. This is indeed the place where the knight met a lady, "full beautiful—a faery's child." Prancing towards us in accoutrements of gold comes the mighty steed carrying her.

"I sat her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sidelong she would bend, and sing
A fäery's song."

In her pink dress, her long golden hair garlanded by the wild roses her knight has placed upon it, the lady rides. We do not see the "wild, wild eyes," for she is gazing down on the upturned face of him who walks as one in a dream, hearkening to her song; the strange song that is ever to hold captive his heart. The glamour is upon him already, as he follows the witching music that is to lull him to sleep, and make him dream.

"The latest dream I ever dream'd,
On the cold hill's side."

On the opposite side is the picture of the "Aphrodite" of Briton Rivière. She has come down from Mount Ida, "the laughter-loving goddess" born of the sea; she has hasted down from "Ida, the many-rilled mother of wild beasts," vestured in raiment of crimson and gold, and at her coming, all the beasts of the forest, the kingly lion, the cruel leopard, the grey wolf, the pard are hastening after her, a motley throng, leaving their fierceness behind, following her for love, as they followed the music of the divine Orpheus. She runs in front, laughing as she goes, and a tiger looks up into her face, that has the whiteness of the foam, and the pink of the rose, and his eyes glow with worship of her. She calls to the doves who are nesting in the forest trees, and they answer her call, and circle above her head. Oh, Aphrodite, goddess of love, tamer of the wild beasts, and of the hearts of man!

". . . . The young stems stand
This lady's temple column, o'er her head
Love wings his shaft."

Another troubling picture is "The Storm Nymphs," by Sir E. J. Poynter. We are at the bottom of the sea, and we watch the

THE FINDING OF SNOW WHITE. BY MRS. ADRIAN STOKES.

This picture, which is now in the New Gallery, illustrates Grimm's enchanting fairy story.

THE STORY OF A ROSE. BY C. M. Q. ORCHARDSON.
(By permission of the Artist, whose copyright the picture is.)

nymphs making merry over the spoils of a wreck. They are unpacking a great chest. Goblets of gold and silver strew the bed of the ocean; they throw coins about in their glee, rich carpets they have unrolled, upon which one of them is lying luxuriously stretched, while the turmoil of the ocean rages high, and we see the strong ship dashed, its mainmast broken, its spars strewn. Above the wreck one sits with the golden lute, upon which she has sung the fatal song that has summoned the storm, and has called the mariners to come to her in the midmost main.

From the disquiet of these heathen gods and goddesses, witches, and nymphs, we turn to look at Melton Fisher's visionary picture of "The Madonna." She walks a dream of peace in the garden where pale lilies gleam, and clustered oranges glow like strange gems. From the sky the constellations look down upon her, faint white clouds surround her, through which we see the faces of cherubs guarding her. In her hands is a breviary, her mantle is of silver and blue. Fair vision of calm and mystery!

> "Far off the trees were as pale wands
> Against the fervid sky: the sea
> Sighed further off eternally,
> As human sorrow sighs in sleep."

We catch a glimpse of an Italian garden filled with cypresses and roses. We think of the nightingales singing their hymn of praise, of the cherubim choiring, of the stars rolling on in great spaces of harmony, and mingling with their music are the dear familiar sounds of earth, the splashing of the waves, and all are saying, as the flaming angel Gabriel said on that day of days to the little maiden, "Hail Mary, full of grace!"

It is to the Holy Mary that the fair girl Waterhouse has painted in "The Missal" is praying. She kneels beside the open window looking out upon a cloistered space of perfect quiet. The red of her sleeves, the gold of her illuminated book, are notes of colour against the tranquil light of the convent garden. Very different is she from the com-

panion picture of another girl looking with brooding eyes into "The Crystal." We can imagine the passionate trouble of this girl's heart, as she tries to decipher the future in that mystic globe.

Many are the pictures that we pass that I should have wished to see with you. There is that jewelled page of history by Alma Tadema. Caracalla, the monster emperor of Rome, is going to the bath; he walks straight and majestic to the inner room, his purple cloak wrapped about him. Before him are the fairest maidens in his empire strewing roses in his path. A lovely picture, a gem of the purest water, perfect in all its parts.

We stop before Blair Leighton's "The end of a Song." A minstrel and a girl whose beauty he celebrates, are sitting on a pillared terrace. The sunlight turns her hair to a golden mist, and love is dancing in the blue depths of her eyes. Her head is wreathed with pearls, her heavy velvet and ermine mantle, her pink satin, gold-embroidered robe proclaim her station. By her side the embroidery lies unheeded, which it is her fancy to weave, and behind her stretches the stately park. The minstrel or troubadour, with no fortune but his gift of song, is pouring his soul into her ear. Over his rough tunic he wears a yet rougher cloak, and in his hand is a harp that he struck as he sung to her of love, of the spring, of high deeds done for her sake; and as she listens the place grows sweet with his accents, grows sweet with the thought of her power. And now the harp is hushed. The troubadour speaks, and still she listens, while creeping up the stairs behind them is a sinister figure, a man with a crown on his head, and in his hand a sword that he is in the act of drawing. Ah, poor girl, poor troubadour! But the tale the picture tells stops here. Still they remain for ever a joy to the eye, the fair girl in her splendid raiment, the dark-eyed youth speaking to her of love. Every detail

SEVENTEEN. BY T. B. KENNINGTON

In this picture, that hangs in the Royal Academy, Sweet Seventeen is seen preparing for her first ball.

is beautifully painted, the marble pillars, the glades of the park beyond, with the sunlight falling through the forest trees on to the mossy roots and capricious groups of boughs.

"Seventeen," by T. B. Kennington, is a far more satisfactory, if less stimulating, picture to think about. A sweet young girl in white is standing drawing on her gloves, and preparing for her first ball. Her maid is putting the last touches to her dress, and the girl is seeing herself reflected in the eyes of her mother, a comely lady anxiously watching her child being adorned for her first ball. By her side is another little girl, also absorbed in seeing the finery that is lavished upon her elder sister, and who, doubtless, is thinking of the time when she too will be standing robed delicately in white, going forth to captivate. She sees it all, the scene that awaits her, the light and the glow and the entrancement of it. The dances will be in full swing, she thinks, and all the dancers will turn to look at her as she enters. Partners will be awaiting her, fighting for her, but she will ignore them all for one among them, doubtless a prince in disguise. A word in her ear and they will ride away side by side, they will gallop, distancing the ostrich and the zebra, till their pursuers are left behind, and they enter his enchanted kingdom. Happy Seventeen, knowing so little of life's disillusions, asking so little, wanting but to love and to love again.

The picture of a woman, painted by C. M. Q. Orchardson, lying with face prone on the sofa, crushing in her hands a rose, might warn her. It is a story told in perfume of happy days never to come again, of joys, that never again will sweeten her life. But Sweet Seventeen does not think of this bankruptcy of hope and faith. She has other dreams, and Mr. Fred Morgan has painted them in "Off for the honeymoon." There is the gallant bridegroom and happy bride, setting forth on life's journey with high hopes, and the confidence of hearts made brave by love.

We pass by "Treasures," by C. E. Perugini, a delightful rendering of a girl fingering a pearl necklace and jewels that have come down to her from her grandmother. The girl's face is alight with joy and admiration of the beautiful baubles, that, in their ancient setting speak of past hopes and triumphs dead and gone.

We pass landscapes delicately illumined by La Thangue, "March Marigolds," a golden glory of flowers, in which a little girl in white and violet is stooping. We watch the freshness of Clausen's evening heavens, the splendid embranchment of Leader's and MacWhirter's trees, the peace of Parson's "poplars." On the lonely veldt stands a gaunt horse by a prostrate figure, looking out for help to come. The poignancy of the lean animal's expression knocks at our hearts. The picture is by Miss Kemp Welch. Not far off is "My Hero," a fair girl on horseback, with a young knight beside her, holding a royalist flag above her head. We can guess the story. She is true to her King, and will risk her life to save his and that of the young hero by her side.

Another picture, pleasant to look at, making us forget the large hopes and disappointments of after-life is "A Morning in the Nursery," by Miss Lily W. Christie. We are caught in all the delights of a pillow fight, taking place early in the morning, when all the world is asleep. The aim, the ducking under, the wild charge, who can describe it all adequately? These little bare-legged maidens in their nightgowns are absorbed in the combat. One has fallen, but the warriors are unmindful of her prostrate condition. The atmosphere is electric with excitement. They will fight until the nursery can hold them and their wrath no more; until the crockery is all broken, the furniture all knocked down, and nurse comes in loudly bewailing the wreckage. The girls may be sent back to bed in disgrace, but they will be indifferent to this reverse of fortune. Life has its jollities. Life is contest, defeat, victory.

We pass by many pictures. There is the "Last Ray," by Leslie. A beautiful old house, low and rambling by the side of a river. The roof is gemmed with lichen and mosses by the captive sunshine of many years. A girl stands in the foreground. Her cap and bodice trans-

figured by the glory of that last ray which is dying on the roof to the right.

In the New Gallery there is one picture which I know would interest you. "Snowdrop," by Mrs. Adrian Stoke. It illustrates a story by the ever enchanting Grimm; the story of Snow White, the little maid whose jealous stepmother hated her for her beauty, and who set a huntsman to take her into the forest and kill her there. But the huntsman's heart, as we all know, failed him, and he allowed the pretty child to escape. Snowdrop, or Snow White as we know her, wanders into the house of seven dwarfs, who ply all day for gold on the mountain side. When they return, and see her lying asleep, they all love her, and ask her to stay with them, and be their housekeeper. The wicked Queen, finding that the huntsman had deceived her, manages to send a poisoned apple to Snowdrop, who eats it, and when the elves return they find their little comrade lying dead. They cannot believe it at first. They try to wake her up, but in vain. At last they said to one another, "We cannot bury her in the black ground," and they ordered a case of transparent glass to be made for her. An inscription in curiously formed letters, at the bottom of the picture, tells us "how they watched and bewailed her, and the birds came also and bewailed Snowdrop. First an owl, and then a raven, and lastly a dove. So Snowdrop lay a long time in her coffin looking as though she was asleep." It is a quaint and charming scene. The little damsel lying straight and stark, snowdrops in her hair and scattered on the pall about her feet; the elves about her mourning, and the birds coming to bewail her.

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MORNING IN THE NURSERY. BY LILY W. CHRISTIE.

One of the most entertaining and spirited of this season's Academy pictures interesting to girls.

These are but a few of the pictures that will interest girls in the Spring Exhibitions, which are unusually charming this year.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

SYNOPSIS.

PHILIPPA, MADGE, THEO AND HOPE, are the four daughters of Edgar Charrington, a man of exceptional genius—artist, musician, and author. He dies, leaving to his four girls and two sons, Stephen and Barnard, the slender legacy of £2,000 with which to equip themselves for the battle of life. The girls have inherited their father's genius: Hope is an accomplished musician; Madge a clever artist; Theo a budding author. Philippa, the eldest girl, is the housekeeper. They come to London, against the advice of Mrs. Loftus, their father's sister, and take a small flat in Tottenham Court Road, determined to expend their capital in securing a good start in their various professions. Stephen goes to a solicitor's firm, Barney into an insurance office, and Madge to the Slade School. Hope has been counting much on the help of a Miss Caldecott, a professional singer and friend of her father. When Hope goes to call on her, however, the singer does not seem much disposed to help, though promises to consider "something with a catchy refrain" if Hope cares to submit it. Theo, in her turn, had counted on the assistance of the Editor of "The Casket," an old friend of her father; but when she goes to see him, he is very discouraging. He gives her some good advice, however, and offers to consider her MSS. from time to time.

The girls greatly enjoy life in the flat. Below them lives a crusty bachelor, an author of some note, whom they and Barney nickname the "Hermit" and treat with much scorn and derision.

CHAPTER IX.

BARNEY'S infectious spirits were a godsend to his sisters, who—truth to tell—were beginning to experience a reaction from their first elation, and to realise how many weary rungs of the ladder had to be ascended before success was gained. Theo felt that she was condescending sadly when she sent off her MS. to the Editor of a threepenny magazine, but that gentleman evidently differed from her opinion, for he sent it back again with admirable promptitude, with only a printed rejection, by way of criticism. Hope received no answer from Miss Minnie Caldecott, and Madge found herself ranked with other new-comers in the antique room at the Slade School, looked down upon with patronising disdain by the older pupils. These latter worked "In the life" and had merry little lunches together in the corridors, while she ate sandwiches in the dreary cloak room in the basement, and sadly reflected that she was not the genius she had imagined. Her talent lay in caricature and bright, original design, and pray how was she to have a chance of exhibiting these gifts in a copy of the Venus de Milo? The probabilities of earning money seemed to retreat into the dim distance, and poor Philippa realised as much, and sighed more and more heavily over the weekly bills.

It was a relief to all to listen to Barney's merry voice, and to sun themselves in his radiant presence. The account of his luncheon in town was a daily amusement, for he had strongly objected to coming home in the middle of the day, and had finally been allowed the lordly sum of eightpence by the head of the exchequer. "It is twice as much as your return fare in the Tube, so I calculate that would be about the cost of

your lunch here. If you go to the right places, Steve says you can get quite a comfortable meal for eightpence. A plate of warm, nourishing soup, or a cup of chocolate and sandwiches." So spoke Philippa in her wisdom, but Barney was too much of a schoolboy to condescend to warm and nourishing diet, while sweetmeats were within his reach. On a chill and rainy day he would make a selection of three custard tarts and a bottle of lemonade, or a cold mince pie, a slice of plum cake, and a glass of milk, after which he would return home in the best of health and spirits to eat at one meal as much as his four sisters put together.

As to his business experiences, Barney was curiously reticent, but he pronounced the office "not bad sport," talked of the heads of departments by their Christian names, alluded to the manager as "Old Waxworks," and was so uncomplaining about the long confinement that Philippa cherished the fondest hopes of his success. The boy had settled down far better than she had expected, and if he were a trifle uproarious at home, it was not at all to be wondered at. Before his arrival, Hope had abandoned scales and exercises, and would play favourite classics for the amusement of her sisters; but Master Barney had little patience with such a tame performance. He preferred to hear popular street ditties, coached Hope in the airs in a loud, cracked treble, and when they were mastered, insisted on a chorus, as often as not throwing in a step dance by way of improvement! From time to time one of his sisters would offer a mild protest—"Don't Barney, don't!" "Barney, be quiet!" whereupon Barney would give a louder stamp than before, or by way of reply elegantly wave a foot over the head of her who had protested.

On one of these convivial occasions there sounded once again that eloquent echo from below, but the performer was happily unconscious, and his sisters, rolling meaning eyes, exerted every device to divert his attention in another direction. Well they knew that if Mr. Barney once grasped the nature of the message, his energy would increase tenfold, and he would dance until he dropped, if only to prove his free and independent spirit!

Then one evening came the formal opening of the war!

At an unorthodox hour of the night the letter-box clanked, and an undirected note fell into the box. Philippa read it, and grew pale with anger; Madge read it, and grew flaming red; Hope cried, "Oh! oh!" and Theo tossed her head like a tragedy queen. The note was short, and to the point; it bore neither address nor signature. "If the occupants of flat No. 10 would have the consideration to remember the existence of their neighbours, it would add greatly to the comfort of the other dwellers in the mansions. Such establishments could not continue to exist if rowdiness and horseplay were permitted without protest. It is sincerely to be hoped that the matter may be remedied before appeal be necessary to those in authority."

"Anonymous, too! As if we did not know perfectly well who wrote it," Philippa cried with curling lip. "Cranky, sallow-faced, jaundiced old wretch! He ought to live in a den, and not among ordinary flesh-and-blood mortals. I'll write an answer—I'll settle him!"

"He banged on the ceiling one day when I was practising!" chimed in Hope, with smouldering resentment. "It isn't as if I were a schoolgirl and couldn't play."

"Thinks we make too much noise, does he!" murmured Barney thoughtfully. "Sweet innocent! He doesn't know he is born. Wait a bit until I have really given my mind to the subject."

"No, no, none of that now, Barney! If we live in a flat, we are bound to keep within bounds," interrupted Steve anxiously. He reviewed the past fortnight, and was bound to acknowledge that the writer of the note had some just ground for complaint. "I am afraid we have been rather noisy since you arrived, but perhaps you can explain in your reply, Phil, that there have been—er—special circumstances—er—not likely to occur again. Smooth him down. Great mistake to quarrel with one's neighbours."

Philippa looked her brother over, her head erect, her shoulders squared in the defiant manner he had learned to know. She made no reply in words, but he understood full well what was meant by that look. If he were prepared to give in meekly, she was not; if he would not fight for the rights of the family, she would do it for him, and it would not be to-day nor to-morrow either, that she would write an apology in response to so audacious a complaint.

All that evening Philippa sat with pursed-up lips, composing and revising an answer which should be at once haughty, sarcastic, and to the point, and no sooner was Stephen safely out of the way next morning than it was written, submitted to Theo for professional revision, and safely deposited in the Hermit's letter-box:

> "Miss Charrington is in receipt of an anonymous letter, the source of which, however, she is at no loss to decide. She agrees with the writer that forbearance and consideration are necessary where several tenants live beneath the same roof, but she would impress

upon his notice that such consideration should be mutual, and not one-sided. It is unreasonable to expect a large and still young family—"

"Still young! he won't like that—it implies that he is so old himself!"

"—to live in a condition of absolute inaction; and repeated and varied complaints—"

"That means the rapping on the ceiling!"

"—are at least as disagreeable to its members, as their musical efforts appear to be to their neighbour."

"That ought to settle him for some time to come!" cried the girls complacently, and when by chance they met the "Hermit" on the stairs they stared at him beneath haughtily-contracted brows, and held their skirts well to the side, lest by chance they should brush against him as they passed.

November was half way through when a second letter arrived to introduce a little excitement into the daily routine. It bore the postmark of a small Norfolk township on the borders of which Mr. Loftus had his shooting box. It was addressed to Hope, and was of an import which brought a flush of excitement to her cheeks. Her "Ohs!" and "Ahs!" of surprise were aggravatingly uninstructive, and in the end Madge took forcible possession of the sheet, and glancing over it rapidly, read out the contents in slow, sententious accents:—"My dear Hope,—As the address will show, we are staying in Norfolk, and I write to ask if you would pay us a visit here from Monday next to Tuesday the 30th. We expect to have several big shoots during the week, and as you are distinctly the most presentable of the family, and your musical abilities can be usefully employed in providing free amusement for my guests, I think you will be quite a valuable addition to our house party. You will find the 11.15 a convenient train, and we will send to the station to meet you, if we have no better use for the carriages."

"*Madge!*" cried Hope aghast.

"What an extraordinary letter!" gasped Philippa, too much stunned by surprise to protest. "Give it to me! Let me see."

Madge handed it over with a shrug of the shoulders, and a slow, whimsical smile.

"Oh well!" she admitted, "that's not a *literal* rendering. I read between the lines, and found the true meaning. Aunt Loftus is all politeness, of course. 'You don't look strong—would be better for a change. Can leave London more easily than your sisters. Be sure to bring plenty of music.' But my reading is the right one, all the same. Bah! Sickening! If you want to be mean, *be* mean, and don't try to wrap it up in the form of philanthrophy. *I* might be as ill as *I* liked, but I should never be asked. Your face is your fortune, Hope, and make the most of it before you grow old and ugly!"

"I won't go. I shall write and refuse," said Hope quickly, for she had noticed a shadow fall across Theo's face, and divined the reason of its presence. Theo would not grudge her a pleasure, but she knew that from a professional point of view her sister could not help wishing the invitation had fallen to her share. Life at a shooting box would be a new experience, a useful background for future stories; the guests, too, would supply the young author with the opportunity of valuable character study. Unfortunately Theo's talent was not of value to a hostess; she herself was conscious that her chance of an invitation to her uncle's shooting box was not much greater than that of Madge. For a moment she was silent, battling against a host of conflicting emotions, then she said bravely,—

"You must go, Hope. It is your duty. You may meet people who will take an interest in you, and be able to help you on, and we can't afford to lose opportunities. You can take your own compositions, and sing them whenever you have a chance; it will be an advertisement in a small way!"

"It seems mean to pay a visit with an idea of making something out of it," said Hope with a sigh. "That is the worst of being poor. The money question seems always to hover in the background, whatever one may do. I shall enjoy seeing Avice, of course, and if I can really help Aunt Loftus it will be comforting to feel that the advantage is mutual. I wonder—What about clothes?"

"That is what I have been thinking. I am afraid we can't afford anything new just now, for the bills are *so* heavy," replied Philippa sadly. "We can only bestow our united treasures upon you, dear, and make you as smart as we know how to. You shall have mother's old lace for your evening frock, but be careful of it, for if you damage it in any way, you had better not face me again! It is going to trim my wedding dress one of these days."

"When the lordly male arrives, before whom she is to grovel in the dust! You shall have my feather boa too. It will hide the shabby front of your jacket," and Theo sighed, for the feather boa was the pride of her wardrobe, and represented months of saving and self-denial. It was none of your thin lanky wisps, but a really

handsome boa, with a bloom on the feathers like that on a hot-house grape. Theo was fastidious, and would rather do without a thing altogether than accept a poor imitation. She thought of her reduced appearance without the beloved fluffiness, and heaved another sigh.

Madge in her turn cried cheerfully, "Nothing to offer you, my dear! My wardrobe is of so limited a character, that if I gave anything away I should have to stay in bed until it was returned. Accept my blessing, and my earnest hope that the head of a great musical publishing house may be among the guests, who will recognise in you the coming genius of the day."

"So likely, isn't it! That sort of thing happens only in novels. The house will probably be full of sporting men, who don't know one composer from another; but who find it enlivening to listen to a 'tune' in the evening. Oh, if Minnie Caldecott would only write! I look out for that letter every morning, but it never comes. Do you think I might send a little note to jog her memory?"

"Certainly! I should think she was the sort of woman who needed a good deal of reminding. Say that you are anxious to know whether she wishes to secure the song, as, if not, you will at once offer it elsewhere. There is nothing like appearing confident, and unperturbed on such occasions. I am sorry you are going away, Hope, for I wanted you to sit for me as fair Rosamond in the picture I have to show to get permission to draw in the life room. I'll have to send in an old one, I suppose. Look over these for me, and tell me which you like best!"

"MADGE FOUND HERSELF RANKED WITH OTHER NEW-COMERS IN THE ANTIQUE ROOM AT THE SLADE SCHOOL." —(*p.* 714).

Hope turned over the sketches in the portfolio, smiling with sisterly pleasure as she recognised one old favourite after another. It seemed incredible to her partiality that Madge should not have immediately ranked as a genius among the students of the school, for surely there was something peculiarly original in the treatment of these figures.

She held out a sheet towards her sisters, and cried eagerly, "There! That is my choice. What do you think of that?"

"Good, suggestive, full of atmosphere!" pronounced Theo in her most professional manner, while Philippa put her head on one side, smiled, and in all innocence of heart launched a second bombshell into their midst.

"Wouldn't it make a good poster? Doesn't it look exactly like some of the posters you see upon the hoardings?"

It was seldom indeed that a speech of Philippa's could wound her faithful friend and admirer, but this time the arrow went home. Madge's thin cheek flushed with displeasure. She gathered together the scattered sketches in silence, keeping her head rigorously turned, while the gentle Hope made strenuous efforts to redeem the situation.

"Well really, so it does! They say poster-painting is an art nowadays. I hear it pays so well that many artists would be thankful to take it up, if it weren't that it requires a special talent. Personally I hope it will be cultivated. It would be so delightful to see the old eyesores replaced by really artistic pictures!"

In vain! Madge remained silent, red, and angry. Poster-painting may be admirable in its way, but when a student dreams of becoming a female Leighton, or Alma Tadema, the alternative is not welcomed with enthusiasm. Philippa reflected sadly that another unfortunate remark was scored against her. Fortunately, however, Madge was of too happy a disposition to harbour a grudge, and in half an hour's time her grievance was dismissed from her mind, and she was once more her own sunny self.

When Barney returned home that evening, he joined in the general chorus of lament at Hope's departure, though his sorrow flowed from a somewhat different source from that of his sisters.

"What a fag!" he cried. "Now that old Hermit Johnny will think that we are quiet because he complained! I wish to goodness I had taken up the flute; I would tootle all the evening for his amusement." He sat for a while gazing at the ceiling in deep reflection. Then he slapped his knee ecstatically. "There's a fellow in the office who belongs to the London Scottish," he said, bounding to and fro, "who has a bagpipe. I say! wouldn't it make the Hermit Johnny sit up if I borrowed it, and practised reels? McGregor wouldn't lend it though. He is a stingy beast who will never do a fellow a good turn. I have a score against him! Well, cheer up, Hope, I'll do my best to fill your place worthily while you're away. I'll find some way of keeping our friend alive, or I'm mistaken."

"Barney, dear! Barney!" murmured Philippa softly.

Barney smiled at her with indulgent tenderness. "Keep your hair on, old lady!" he said encouragingly, and Philippa could only gasp, and pant beneath his bear-like hug, and declare that never, no never, had she met such an unmanageable, disrespectful, vulgar boy!

CHAPTER X.

A WEEK later Hope travelled down to Norfolk with the united fineries of the family in her box, a mind stored with good advice from the stock of worldly wisdom of her sisters, and a heart filled with mingled expectation and foreboding. It was the first time in her life that she had paid a visit on her own account, and she realised, with a shock of surprise, what a child she remained, in spite of her three and twenty years, and how unlimited was her inexperience! Now that she was really on her way, and it was too late to turn back, she sat aghast at her temerity in daring to face a houseful of strangers, and trembled at the ordeal of appearing before them. She would arrive at the station at half-past four; after that would follow a drive of say half an hour. If she arrived at the house at five o'clock, would tea be over, or only in progress? Would the men have returned from their day's sport? Would many guests be present to whom she must be introduced, and who would all want to know if she were tired, if the train had been punctual, if she had had a comfortable journey? Would there be any girls in the party besides herself, and if so, would they be very superior and fashionable? Would Avice be friendly and affectionate, or too much taken up with her duties to waste time on insignificant Hope Charrington? All these, and a thousand other questions occupied Hope's busy brain till she reached the end of her journey.

Insignificant Hope Charrington looked, if the truth were told, anything but insignificant as she took her place in the high dog-cart that was waiting at the station. Indeed, as she drove through the little country town, more than one admiring glance was cast upon the pretty young lady, whose golden hair and pink and white complexion showed to such advantage against the severe black of her attire. Tired shop assistants gazed at her through the shop windows and sighed with envy as they looked. It must be grand to be a lady, and have nothing to do but enjoy oneself and look pretty, and never know an anxious thought all one's days! That lovely young lady, for instance, was going to stay at The Shanty, where there was already a houseful of guests, handsome men ready to fall in love at a moment's notice; girls over whom the new-comer would very likely reign as queen! Her luggage was no doubt following in the cart, box upon box of fineries, different dresses for every day in the week; jewel cases full of glittering gems!

These imaginers could not know that in reality poor Hope was clenching her hands to keep them from trembling, that she was wishing with all her might that the one black silk evening dress would not be a mass of creases when unpacked, that she was wondering if it were possible that where she was going she would meet a friend who might be able to help her to earn some money, a little money to put towards those terrible household expenses!

Ten minutes' drive and they had left the town behind them, another ten minutes and the lodge gates of The Shanty came in sight; then three minutes more and Hope was stepping inside an entrance hall lined with fine old tapestries, that stretched the whole length of the house. The sound of voices came to her ear, but she could not locate them until she had walked half way down the hall. Then a deep recess came in view, on the right-hand side, a recess as big as an ordinary room, wherein a dozen people sat round a blazing fire, drinking tea with leisurely enjoyment. At sight of the new-comer, there was a general pause in the conversation. Mrs. Loftus rustled forward to greet her. Avice smiled, and extended a languid hand, and Uncle Loftus murmured jocosely, "Hope on, Hope ever! So here you are, my dear, eh! Glad to see you. Have a cup of tea, my dear!"

"Sit here, Hope. Let me introduce you," and Hope listened confusedly to a long list of names, bowed automatically from time to time, then thankfully subsided into a seat in a corner. There were four ladies present besides herself, her aunt and cousin, one elderly and prosaic matron, and one young and sparkling brunette, who was busily occupied flirting with three men at the same time, and seemed capable of adding indefinitely to their number. For the rest, there were men in shooting coats and leather gaiters, old men, middle-aged men, young men, all bronzed and healthy, and remarkably well satisfied with themselves and their day's sport.

Hope studied them shyly as she nibbled at her scone. The buzz of conversation had begun again by this time, and as her presence was apparently forgotten, she was at leisure to pursue her investigations. The stout, grey man was the husband of the prosaic lady; the merry little man with the round bald head and the short legs was evidently an intimate of the family, for he threw fresh logs on the fire, and even dared to chaff Mrs. Loftus. The fair youth with the eye-glass was only pretending to be captivated by Miss Brunette; the older man with the fair hair was seriously smitten; the tall, distinguished-looking personage with the haughty eyelids and drooping moustache, had the air of being bored by everything and everyone. Hope looked at him critically with a view to describing him to Theo. "He would make a splendid hero. Dark features, sharply cut, two horizontal lines in his forehead; lazy eyes that give a flash now and then, and show that he could be active enough if he chose; a square chin, and such great, wide shoulders. He looks quite different from the other men, and yet I don't know why he should."

She looked him critically up and down, and her eyes travelling upwards again found his

"HOPE LOOKED SO PRETTY AND SO WINSOME THAT RALPH SMILED IN INVOLUNTARY FRIENDLINESS."—*(p. 720.)*

dark ones studying her in return. This might have been an embarrassing discovery, but before it had time to become so, the man who was different from other men had strolled across the hall, taken possession of the seat by her side, and was inquiring if she felt tired after her journey, in a tone which seemed to imply that he took not the faintest interest in her reply.

"A little tired," said Hope prosaically, conscious that if Madge had been in her place she would have been ready with a vivacious retort that would have broken the ice of formality. She felt quite unable to frame such a retort. Instead, she said simply, "I am not particularly fond of railway travelling, and I dislike changes. I never feel that I can settle down comfortably when there is a change before me. Even if it is two hours ahead, I cannot determine somehow to undo a rug, and make myself comfortable."

"No?" said Mr. Merrilies, and once again his voice sounded so flat and uninterested that she wished she had not been so explicit in setting forth her feelings. She allowed herself to be helped to a second cup of tea, then relapsed into silence, waiting patiently for a fresh lead. The other men were discussing the day's sport, and presently her companion must needs report on "the bag" in his turn.

"We have been over the Tansy Woods to-day, seven of us, and the bag was two hundred and fifteen pheasants, a brace of partridges, thirty hares and ninety-five rabbits. Pretty fair, isn't it?"

"I don't know!" said Hope simply. "I know nothing about shooting. Neither my father nor brother were sportsmen, so I cannot judge what is bad or good. It seems a tremendous number!"

She looked so pretty and so winsome as she glanced up at him with her childlike eyes, that his face relaxed from its set lines, and he smiled in involuntary friendliness.

"A few years ago it would have been a record day, a day to put in the papers, but now it is nothing at all extraordinary. In shooting as in everything else the standard has risen, and we are less easily satisfied. It is an age of great expectations; don't you think so?"

"I don't know," said Hope again, but her brow clouded, and presently she asked in an anxious, little voice, "Do you really think the standard has risen in everything? Would it be more difficult to do well in—er—in any profession, for instance, than it was a dozen years ago? Would you have to be much cleverer?"

"Oh dear, yes! certainly you would. It is a different thing altogether. A dozen years ago people were easily pleased, and ready to make allowances, but nothing short of perfection satisfies us nowadays. The days of the amateur are past; even professionals need constant study to maintain their high standard."

"Y—es!" assented Hope faintly. She thought of her poor little songs, of Theo's "worrying" story, and Madge's poster-like pictures, and she felt a sinking of heart that left her no appetite for scones and plum cake. She and her sisters had thought themselves geniuses at dear little Leabourne, but three months' experience of London had brought a bitter disillusionment. She stared at the ground, and Mr. Merrilies in his turn stared at her charming profile, and sighed to think that the prettiest girls were always the most stupid. He was unfeignedly glad when Avice came forward to take her cousin up to dress for dinner.

The room which had been set apart for Hope was one of the smallest and least handsomely furnished in the house, as became the abode of a poor relation, but it looked attractive enough all the same, with a bright little fire burning in the grate, and the curtains drawn cosily over the windows. Hope's box had already been unpacked, and as there could be no question of "What will you wear for dinner?" there lay the black silk on the bed, solid and sober. Avice glanced at it carelessly: "Oh yes, that will do very well. We shall be quite alone," she said with a nod, then leant against the mantelpiece, and smiled at her cousin with languid friendliness. She gave the impression of wishing to be really kind, but of lacking the energy to put her intention into effect; as a matter of fact, the girl was too anæmic to feel keen interest in anything or anybody.

"Sure you have all you want? If you require anything just ring, and it will be brought to you at once. You needn't be downstairs for an hour and a-half. There are some books over there, if you would like to read!"

"Couldn't you stay and talk to me?" asked Hope shyly, but Avice thought not, thought she had better lie down, thought there would be plenty of time to talk another day. She glided listlessly away, leaving the new-comer chilled and disappointed.

A little reading; a home letter begun with a "detaily" description of journey, arrival, and first impressions; a careful if simple toilette, made short work of the hour and a-half's waiting, and Hope stepped shyly out of her room to find her way along the corridor. Half-way

down a door creaked, a pair of dark eyes peered cautiously forth, followed by the whole of a curly dark head, and Miss Brunette's voice accosted her with the ease and geniality of an old acquaintance.

"There you are! I have been looking out for you. Do come and lace my dress, there's a kind creature! I have rung the bell three times over, but I suppose it is broken, as nobody has appeared. I didn't bring a maid with me this time, did you?"

"I? A maid! I never possessed such a thing in my life," cried Hope laughing; at which Miss Brunette stared, looked her critically up and down, and affected to frown.

"Really? But then it doesn't matter to you. You are one of those exasperating people who can't help looking nice whatever they do. I *did* bless you when you walked in this afternoon! If there is one thing that makes me wild, it is to have a better-looking girl than myself staying in a house. I have had it all my own way here so far, for Avice is too lazy to count, but now I shall have to play second fiddle. Men are so silly about pretty faces. Do you think I am pretty? Honestly? Yes, most people do, but to tell you a dead secret, it is all a mistake. I am really barely good-looking, but I give an impression of prettiness by my vivacity and strict attention to business."

Hope laughed, and the two chattered gaily, as Hope helped the other with her toilette. When it was finished, Truda Bennett slid her hand through the girl's arm in friendly confidence. "You are a dear," she said. "I like you. I thought when you came in that you were bound to be slow and proper. I always mistrust fair girls with blue eyes. Nine times out of ten they are deadly uninteresting, but I can see you are an exception. I will try not to be jealous of you, if you will promise not to flirt with Ralph Merrilies. I'm especially interested in him; so play fair, won't you? You may have all the others."

"How wholesale of you! Are you sure you mean it? From what I have seen, I should not imagine you would be satisfied with one!"

In dealing with such a very outspoken young lady it seemed best to reply in the same strain, but Hope marvelled inwardly at the eccentricities of human nature. Imagine, just imagine, being "interested" in somebody, and confiding the fact to a stranger the very first time one spoke to her! It would be difficult enough to speak of it even to Theo, her life-long friend and companion; but to a stranger—it was incredible! Hope studied the girl's dark face with curious eyes as they walked down-stairs, while the men gathered round the fire-place below, watched them as they approached, and admired the pretty picture. They made a charming contrast—the sparkling brunette in her amber draperies and the tall figure in the black dress, with the sweet pink and white face.

Directly after dinner Mrs. Loftus sent Hope to the piano. The girl sat down unaffectedly, and played several pieces in succession, to the complete satisfaction of the company, who apparently found it much more agreeable to discourse to music than without it. Mr. Merrilies indeed did stroll across the room to stand by her side, and say "Thank you" at the conclusion as if he meant what he said, but from a general point of view the performance was a failure, and Mrs. Loftus felt disappointed. Hope had been invited with the especial intent of providing amusement for her guests, and if she failed to do so there was really no reason for her presence there.

"Sing something to us, Hope!" she said imperiously. "Sing some of your own songs. Miss Charrington has composed some charming little things," she explained to the company at large, who murmured politely in response.

"Compose? How wonderful of you! How do you manage to do it?" queried Truda eagerly, while the fair youth pulled his moustache, and looked at Hope as if she were a wild animal escaped from the Zoo, and Uncle Loftus began humming what he fondly supposed to be the air of "The Song of Sleep" to his companion on the sofa. Plainly the best thing to do was to begin at once before the situation grew more embarrassing, so Hope broke into the accompaniment of song number one, a simple but taking little production which had been published two years before. It was greeted with uproarious applause, so spontaneous and genuine that it could not fail to be inspiriting. Hope forgot to be nervous and sang "Pack Clouds Away" as she knew best, sweetly, smoothly, and with a distinctness of enunciation which is so rare a charm. More applause followed, more exclamations of appreciation, more queries as to "how she did it," and then Uncle Loftus must needs begin humming again, and put in a request for "The sleepy one, you know! The one you wrote to order. That is the gem of the collection, in my opinion. We should like to hear the sleepy one, my dear!"

Now, as it happened, Hope was by no means anxious to grant this request, for the idea which

Miss Caldecott had so slightly suggested had appealed very strongly to her sensitive nature, and she had put into it her best work, with the hope that when listening to it its hearers might feel something of the same thrill, the same earnestness which she had experienced in its composition. She had never been able to go through it unmoved, and it seemed almost sacrilege to sing it in this room full of noisy strangers, who would miss its point, and at best pronounce it "sweetly pretty." She tried to protest, to declare that she had already monopolised the piano too long, but it was of no avail. The more she hung back, the more eager became her audience. "The sooner begun, the sooner it's done!" she said to herself, with a sigh of resignation.

Casting down her eyes, Hope began to sing softly and slowly, as became the theme. Theo had clothed the idea in simple and touching words, and Hope had seconded her with something akin to inspiration; the last few lines, with their subtle change of key, contained an effect that was at once charming and pathetic. "So to us all comes the end of the day," sang Hope softly—so softly that the crackle of the firewood sounded loud in the ears of the listeners.

So to us all comes the end of the day,
When our playmates are lost, and our toys cast away,
Tired children of earth, when the shadows fall deep,
The Father in Heaven will grant to us—sleep!

The pause before the last word gave to it an added emphasis. Hope let her hands fall on her lap with a sigh of pent-up emotion. Her eyes were bright with unshed tears, but there were no signs of emotion in the audience.

"How sweetly pretty!" cried Truda, in the very accents which the singer had heard in imagination.

"I say! Quite touching, isn't it!" said the youth with the fair moustache.

There was a babel of "Thanks—thanks awfully!" and Aunt Loftus said graciously, "You must be tired, my dear! Come and sit over here. We must really give you a rest!"

For five minutes afterwards Hope, the centre of an admiring throng, tasted the bitter-sweet of an applause which failed to appreciate the true merit of her work. It was pleasant enough, so far as it went, but it left a disappointed ache behind, and she was not sorry when Truda asserted her rights, and by means of a trick with a lead pencil, a piece of paper and a hand-glass succeeded once more in gathering the company round herself.

Hope stood on the outside of the circle, a little tired after her exertions, and thankful for a moment's breathing space. As she stood, she became conscious of a steady gaze levelled upon her from the other end of the room. Mr. Merrilies had not taken up a position near Truda with the other men, but was leaning against the mantelpiece, while he studied her face with a grave, intent questioning. For a moment each looked deep into the other's eyes; the figures in the room seemed to fade away, and these two saw each other as they really were, shorn of all the pretence and artificiality of society.

"It is true," he said to himself. "Her mind is as lovely as her face. She could not have composed that song—she could not have sung it as she did, if she were not everything that is sweet and good. Hope! I wonder—I wonder if—at last—"

He dropped his arm from the mantelpiece and walked forward to join the group by the table, while Hope shrank still further into the shadow. Her cheeks flushed, her heart beat with an unaccustomed quickening. "I believe," she said to herself—"I believe he understood!"

"THEY MADE A CHARMING CONTRAST, THE SPARKLING BRUNETTE IN HER AMBER DRAPERIES, AND THE TALL FIGURE IN THE DARK DRESS" (*p.* 721)

CHAPTER XI.

THREE days passed, and Hope enjoyed thoroughly the new experience of life in a crowded and constantly changing household. Certain of the guests were fixtures—among whom were numbered Truda Bennett, Mr. Merrilies, and the fair and facetious Reggie Blake, but for the rest, every day saw fresh arrivals, fresh departures, all involving a certain amount of extra work to the busy servants. Hope could not help realising the truth of Madge's shrewd surmise that she had been asked to make herself of use, for her aunt did not fail to claim her services a dozen times a day. She arranged the flowers, decorated the dinner table, answered business letters, made up and unpacked parcels, and in short discharged all the little duties which ordinarily fell upon the daughter of the house. The work kept her more or less separate from the rest of the party, and there were occasions when she listened longingly to the bursts of laughter which sounded from the hall, or from the billiard-room, when on a wet day the resourceful Truda organised a billiard tournament for the entertainment of the men. But for the most part she was delighted to be of use, to watch her aunt's hard manner gradually soften into something closely approaching affection, and to receive from time to time one of her cousin's rare caresses. Avice never offered to take any part in the work, but the listless eyes noted more than was imagined, and looking back over the day's history, Hope often realised that it was to a quiet word or suggestion from Avice's lips that she owed what little pleasure came in her way.

With Mr. Merrilies she had conversation but seldom, for he was out shooting all day long, and in the evening Truda, claiming him for her own, allowed him little opportunity to leave her side. She had dozens of what she called "parlour tricks," and every evening produced some new device to attract attention. Now it was a ring slung on a piece of string, which must be separated without undoing the knot; now a feat of balancing; now some marvellous thought-reading, carefully arranged beforehand with a confederate. She was a young person whom it was impossible to ignore, who systematically made herself the centre of attraction, laughing, talking at the pitch of her voice, and gesticulating with her little ringed hands—vivacity itself. Hope felt a curious fascination in watching Mr. Merrilies' expression as he passively played the part of assistant; she asked herself curiously if he returned Truda's feeling of "especial interest"? Impossible to say. His inscrutable face was no index to his feelings, and if he showed no special pleasure in being thus singled out, he at least made no effort to escape it. In spite of the warning which she had received, Hope could not help feeling more interest in this man than in any other member of the party; and she realised, with a little thrill of satisfaction, that the interest was mutual. If she took advantage of an unobserved moment to study him, he lost no opportunity of watching her, and the knowledge that his dark eyes were ever fixed on her as she talked, and sang, and moved about the room, filled her with a new and delightful self-consciousness.

Now Hope was a human, loving-hearted girl, and as was only natural, had given many a thought to the lover of the future. But it never occurred to her, somehow, that there was any danger in the interest which she felt in Ralph Merrilies, or in her intense consciousness of his presence. She deluded herself into the belief that she was less friendly disposed to him than to any of the party, for she had been warned that another girl considered him her individual property, and she was by no means willing to share his attentions. So it came to pass that she kept quietly in the background, and had little or nothing to say to Truda's cavalier.

On the third evening of her stay the sportsmen came home unusually tired, and for once Truda's after-dinner tricks failed to entertain. The men had no inclination to exert their minds or their muscles either, and, turning to Hope, begged her for "a tune."

"The worst of Miss Charrington," sighed Reggie Blake regretfully, "is that she is so classical and superior. She never condescends to play a piece whose composer hasn't seven syllables to his name and a sneeze in the middle. They are very clever and all that sort of thing, don't you know, but I always wonder when the tune is going to begin. Bang, bang, up in the treble—bang, bang, in the bass—a rolling like heavy machinery, and all sorts of jerks and breaks when you are least expecting them—that is what you call a 'Gigue.' A bit of a scale played wrongly, repeated over and over again like the tune the old cow died of—that is a 'Fugue.' I've a musical sister, so I know. Now I don't pretend to be classical; I like a good, rousing air—something that makes you want to stamp your feet and beat time with your head. Look at Miss Charrington laughing at me! I

suppose as a matter of fact you don't know any airs, Miss Charrington?"

"I have a schoolboy brother!" answered Hope, demurely. She wheeled round on the music stool and looked at him with dancing eyes, and to see Hope look mischievous was something very well worth seeing in those days of sweet and twenty. "I blush to say"—she said slowly, though she did not blush at all, but only looked particularly beaming and complacent—"I blush to say that there is not a single tune at present performed upon the barrel organs with which I am not intimately acquainted. I shall be happy to accompany you, or to coach you in the words whenever you feel inclined to perform!"

"Hurrah! Good business! Will you really?" cried Reggie, jumping to his feet, and hurrying across to the piano, all abeam with delight. "Can you manage 'Mrs. 'Enry 'Awkins?' That is my stock song, and I sing it wherever I go. Mrs. Loftus, you are dying to hear me sing 'Mrs. 'Enry 'Awkins'? I thought you were. Let's tune up at once, Miss Charrington, and a chorus, mind—a rousing old chorus!"

Everyone was laughing, and of a sudden bright and animated; no one was sleepy any longer. There was a secondary accompaniment of chuckles as Blake screwed up his thin ugly face into the most comical of grimaces and half sang, half recited, the celebrated coster love song. Hope's spirited playing made him sing his best, and her clear voice started the chorus with such spirit that presently everyone was taking part, tentatively at first, then with quickly-growing ardour, until at the last the volume of sound became overpowering. Uncle Loftus bellowed himself hoarse in his corner, and even Mrs. Loftus's lips moved in sympathetic echo. At the conclusion of the song there was an outburst of applause and laughter that made the performer beside himself with delight.

"To think," he cried, "that we have wasted our time over Wagner and Grieg and all those foreign Johnnies, when we might have had music like this! I'll sing it every night. We must work up some more choruses. I say, Mrs. Loftus, have you any Gilbert and Sullivan operas in the house? Couldn't we have a go at them?"

Why not, indeed? No sooner said than done. Out came the operas from the music cabinet, and as half-a-dozen voices urged the claims of half-a-dozen favourites, there was plainly nothing to be done but take each in turn. The chorus was by way of being a scratch combination: one treble; one alto, who had not only to accompany as well as sing, but also to put in all the high notes, because the treble declared that she could not "go" above F; two tenors, by no means as correct as they might have been; and an army of heavy, dragging basses. But what the chorus lacked in ability it gained in ardour.

Mr. Merrilies could not sing at all, but he volunteered to turn over the pages, and, seating himself by Hope's side, watched her face for the signal which was to guide his inexperience. At first this signal was a quick glance at his face, but as time went on this was replaced by a nod of the head, or an upward jerk of the hand, for there was something in the expression of those watching eyes which it was embarrassing for Hope to meet at close quarters. The two talked between the choruses—when the different parts were wrangling loudly, each laying the blame upon the other, each calling attention to his own superior performance—and it was not in girl-nature to fail to notice that Ralph seemed less concerned about the music than her own comfort. The lamp was moved because it dazzled her eyes, the book was raised to a more convenient angle, a door was closed to avoid a draught, and all in a quiet, unobtrusive manner that made the attention doubly acceptable. Members of large families are not accustomed to have their wishes gratified almost before they are realised, and they are all the more ready to appreciate such consideration when they receive it. Hope played, and sang, and instructed, gave leads, banged insistently upon notes which the singers rendered flat instead of sharp, and even finished a tenor solo which had hopelessly come to grief, until hand, and voice, and head alike ached with fatigue. But still the insatiable chorus clamoured for more, remembering another and another favourite which it would be a sin to leave untried.

"You are tired!" said a low voice in her ear. "You must not play any longer!" Before she had time to protest Ralph Merrilies had risen from his seat and closed the book with a determined hand. "It is nearly eleven o'clock! Do you realise how long you have kept Miss Charrington? She has earned a rest. Come and sit down, Miss Charrington. Your back must need support."

"Better come upstairs with me, Hope. I am just going," said Avice, rising from the sofa and slipping her hand through her cousin's arm. The singers, contrite at their own lack of consideration, busied themselves putting away the music, and gathered into little groups round the piano, so that Mr. Merrilies and the two girls were alone in their corner, and their conversation was not over-

heard. "I am afraid we have been very selfish," he said, looking at Hope's tired face, "but the music has been such a pleasure that we have gone on and on without noticing the time, and Miss Charrington was too good-natured to remind us that she was growing tired."

"Hope never thinks of herself," said Avice quietly. The colour flamed into Hope's white cheeks, and her blue eyes brightened with pleasure at this unexpected praise from her cousin. Avice! Avice the languid, the undemonstrative, to praise her aloud, and in company! Hope was too much taken aback to protest in a conventional way, but she noticed that Mr. Merrilies looked even more pleased than herself. He smiled at Avice with a new interest in his eyes, and said quickly—

"In that case it is our duty to look after her. I should suggest fresh air to begin with. How is it that she never joins us at our out-of-door luncheons?"

"She stays at home to help mother, but she shall come to-morrow. I will bring her," replied Avice in a voice that for once was not languid, but brisk and decided. Wonders would never cease! Was friendship for a girl of her own age about to rouse the listless Avice to an active interest in the life which was going on around her?

"'LET'S TUNE UP AT ONCE, MISS CHARRINGTON,' SAID REGGIE BLAKE, 'AND A CHORUS, MIND, A ROUSING CHORUS.'" (*p.* 724).

CHAPTER XII.

IT was with the exultation of a child on a holiday that Hope prepared to start for the picnic lunch the next day. Hitherto she had watched the departure of the other ladies with a spasm of not unnatural envy, but now she was going herself! The day was bright and mild, and it was so pleasant to drive in the open behind Pipeclay, the little white pony which was Avice's special favourite. Truda and a young married lady, who was the latest addition to the house party, had driven on ahead with the luncheon baskets, so the two cousins were alone, and could talk together without fear of interruption. Hope was all brightness and animation, indeed she was experiencing at that moment a mysterious lightness of heart which made her see everything through rose-coloured spectacles. She admired everything—the grey stretches of the winter landscape, the outline of the trees against the skies, the tumble-down cottages by the road-side; while Avice listened to her animated talk with a wistful smile on her face.

"You enjoy everything, Hope. How do you manage it? I wish I knew your secret, for to me it all seems so stale and uninteresting. I do not believe there is anything in the world which would make me so bright and happy as you seem this morning!"

"Nothing?"

"No, nothing! I enjoy some things more than others, of course, but, honestly, for me the happiest moment of the day is when I lie down in bed, and feel that for eight hours at least I need do nothing but rest."

"Poor darling!" cried Hope sympathetically, "Poor darling! that is a matter of health, of course; but Avice don't you think that perhaps if you ——"

"Yes, if I what?"

Hope knitted her brows and looked distressed and nervous. "Oh, I don't want to preach, but perhaps if you had something to do—if you did not think quite so much of—I mean to say that if one is feeling weak and listless, so long as one lies about on sofas and has nothing to do, one goes on feeling worse and worse. But if one gets interested——"

"Yes, I know what you mean, but how is one to get interested? that is the question; I am not clever like you, and have no hobbies to occupy my mind, and I get so bored with myself. Mother won't let me help her. She thinks I am too delicate, and, apart from that, she is quick and I am slow, and it would fidget her to see me droning through what she could do in half the time. It is all very well to say 'have an interest?' Everything that seems new and exciting to you here is stale to me. I am sick to death of living in public as we do, entertaining one set of visitors after another, who all say the same things and amuse themselves in the same way. I am not strong enough to go out "slumming" or visiting hospitals as some girls do. Where would *you* find your interest if you were in my place, Hope?"

"I'd find it somewhere," said Hope, sturdily. "You have plenty of money and plenty of time, and there must be a hundred ways of putting them to account. I—I think I would try to help girls who are alone in the world, and struggling to make their living. We are all together, and have enough money to keep us from actual want, but I can imagine how *awful* it must be for girls who are all alone, with no one to help them if they fall ill, whose lives are one long, colourless struggle, with never a ray of brightness or pleasure from Monday morning until Saturday night! Could you not think of some way of helping them? What could you do? I know! I have it! There is that sweet little lodge with no one living in it but old George and his wife, and she was lamenting to me only yesterday that her daughters were married, and there were no young folks left in the house. Why should you not furnish two rooms upstairs, and invite poor shop assistants and girl-clerks to come down for their holidays, two at a time, so that they would be companions for each other? It would be so easy to manage, for you need not think of expense, and Mrs. Moss would wait upon them, and you could provide their amusements. You could go round with Pipeclay and take them out for drives; you could lend them books and papers, and have them up to the house to tea. They would confide their joys and troubles to you, and tell you about their 'friends,' and write letters to you when they went home. When they married, you could help to provide the trousseaux, and when the first little girls were born they would be called after you, and you would knit their socks. They would be brought up to love you, because you had been kind to their mothers, and it would be the dream of their lives to be asked down to see all the places of which they had heard so much from them. In a dozen homes all over the country people would be blessing you, and looking upon you as the good fairy who had brought them health and happiness. Oh, Avice, you lucky girl! What would I give if I had such a chance? I would begin to-morrow, to-day—this very afternoon!"

"Well!" said Avice reflectively; "Well!" It was not in her nature to be enthusiastic like her cousin, but she smiled as if the idea found favour in her sight, and her dull eyes brightened. "It *does* sound nice! I suppose I could do it if I liked. Mother wouldn't mind, and Mrs. Moss would be delighted. She is one of those women who are never so happy as when they are nursing someone, and she would coddle the girls from morning till night, and give them beaten-up eggs and black-currant jelly for their throats, and her celebrated cough mixture made out of nine 'ingrediencies!' I really will think about it, Hope! I believe it would be interesting. Would you help me to furnish the rooms, and make them pretty and artistic?"

"Rather! I adore buying things—when someone else has to pay. We would have one room blue and one pink, with white paint and dear little white beds, and bookcases full of nice books, and comfy wicker chairs by the window where they could sit and read, and rest their poor tired backs. And I would be your town agent, and look out for likely subjects. If I were in a shop and saw a poor, anæmic-looking girl I could find out her circumstances from the manager, or head of the department, and if she had no one to look after her, and was living in the shop or in poky little lodgings, I could send on her name to you, and you would invite her to come here for the holidays. Oh, you are going to do it, my dear! You'll *have* to do it! I'll give you no peace till you do."

"I'll think about it. I can't decide things in a moment, but I would like to work with you, Hope, and it doesn't sound too formidable. I really think I could arrange a pleasant holiday for the girls."

"I really think you might!" agreed Hope, laughing, and then suddenly came a halloa of welcome, and over the fence appeared one head after another as the shooting party rose to receive the new-comers.

Truda and Mrs. Inglis had arrived some ten minutes earlier, and luncheon was laid on a cloth under the shelter of the hedge, mackintosh sheets being spread upon the ground on which the guests could sit without fear of rheumatic consequences. A few yards away the beaters were already refreshing themselves with meat pies and copious draughts of beer, while from the hampers had come forth all manner of tempting viands, to which the sportsmen did ample justice, the while they protested at such dainties.

"HOPE WALKED RAPIDLY FORWARD, WAVING HER HANDS, AND UNFOLDING HER PROGRAMME WITH CHARACTERISTIC CHARRINGTON ENTHUSIASM" (*p.* 729.)

"Mrs. Loftus spoils us altogether. I don't approve of luxuries at a shooting-lunch. Good wholesome bread and cheese ought to be enough for any man. We are getting too soft as a nation—that is what is the matter with us. It would be a lot better if we went back to simpler ways. Cut me a chunk more of that galantine, that's a good fellow! A *chunk*, I said—cut it thicker can't you!" and Reggie Blake bent forward to superintend the carver's movements with an anxiety of expression which evoked a hearty laugh from all his companions. Mrs. Nash, the new-comer, was offering "a handsome wife and ten thousand a year" in the shape of the last roll upon a plate, to an old bachelor of sixty, who appeared much delighted at the prospect. Truda was playing tunes on the rim of her tumbler. Avice had actually a tinge of colour in her cheeks, and Hope sat perched on a cushion looking down on them all like a queen on her throne. Before the meal had begun she had found herself seated uncomfortably between two of the least interesting of the sportsmen, but she had hardly time to realise her disappointment before—presto! the scene was changed. Mr. Merrilies had strolled towards the pony cart, and returned with an armful of cushions, which he placed on the ground close to where he himself had been sitting. "There!" he said, "those are for you, Miss Charrington. You have evidently not mastered the art of lunching comfortably on the ground, and we shall have to break you in by degrees. Let me take your plate!" Thus in the most open and natural fashion the change was effected, which was fraught with so much satisfaction to the two

people most concerned. It was so much pleasanter than the old position, thought innocent Hope: the view was more extended, more beautiful, more sunny and cheerful, and to judge from his unusual animation, Ralph Merrilies was of the same mind as herself. There was no chance of private conversation, but there are occasions when the most commonplace phrases become interesting, and the very passing of the mustard a thrilling incident.

When lunch was over the ladies agreed to walk a little way with the men, leaving the carts to pick them up at another point. Once again Hope found herself carried off by Ralph Merrilies and guided by such a circuitous path that the other members of the party were soon far ahead, and safely out of hearing. For a time the pair talked of matters connected with the day's sport, but gradually the conversation took a more personal tone, and Hope found this handsome young man confiding details of his life to her attentive ears. It appeared that his parents were dead and that he owned an estate in Hampshire, where he lived in much luxury and greater boredom, during such portions of the year as he was not visiting or risking his life abroad in search of adventure. That he was, in short, one of those wealthy, idle men, of whom Hope had often read but never met. Her naïve interest and curiosity concerning himself charmed him. She asked for a description of the house, of his housekeeper-aunt's appearance, character, and attainments; she wondered what he did all day; she suggested improvements in the grounds, and was much concerned to hear of a fire among the stacks at the home farm. Then he adroitly led the conversation to herself, beginning with a reference to the subject in which she appeared most deeply interested.

"I suppose you amuse yourself with music! As you sing, and play, and compose, you have plenty of variety to keep you going. The worst of possessing so many talents is that they are so much appreciated by other people that they want to work you to death for their amusement. Last night, for instance! It was too bad to keep you at the piano all the evening, and treat you as though you were a professional accompanist."

"I wish I were!" sighed Hope wistfully, and when her companion looked at her with a start of surprise, "That is what I want to be!" she added simply. "I have to earn my living in some way, and neither my voice nor my playing are good enough for public performances, but I *can* accompany! I should be thankful if anyone *would* hire me for the purpose!"

Ralph Merrilies looked at her in silent astonishment. He had taken for granted that as the niece of the wealthy Mr. Loftus, Hope Charrington occupied the same position in society. Manlike he had noticed none of the signs of poverty in her attire which were plain as print to feminine eyes. What if her attire was always of the simplest description, she invariably looked better than any other girl in the room! If her one solitary dress did duty for every evening, a new arrangement of laces transformed it in his eyes, and if she wore no jewels like other women, the round white throat and arms looked all the better for their lack of adornment. It gave him a shock of surprise to hear her speak of making her own livelihood.

"Do you really mean that?" he asked gravely.

In reply Hope gave him a short biographical sketch, which explained the present position of the family. "So you see I am responsible for a share of our expenses," she said in conclusion, "and it is not so easy to earn it as I expected. I thought I should have little difficulty in getting songs published, but I find it is very difficult indeed, and even if I sold one or two in the year, they would bring in very little. So I must find something that is more certain. I know that I should make a good accompanist, for I can read at sight and transpose as I go, and I know when to humour a singer, and when to pull him up. But the difficulty is to find an opening? I do hope that I may not be reduced to giving lessons. That would be a real trial of patience, and the prospect is so hopelessly limited."

"You must not give lessons! That would never do," said Ralph, drawing his brows together in a disapproving frown. That she should need to work at all was an idea still disagreeably new. "You speak of becoming an accompanist? What does that mean exactly? Is there an opening for accompaniment playing, apart from taking a more prominent place in a programme?"

"Oh, yes. Professionals often insist upon taking their own accompanists, for it is so easy for a stranger to spoil their effects. Even among amateurs they are occasionally required. Suppose a lady gets up a concert for charity, or gives a musical 'At-Home,' or has private theatricals, it is an immense help to have someone who can play for all the performers alike, improvise a few bars if things go wrong, and fill up awkward gaps by appropriate 'Selections.' That is the work which would suit me best if I could make a start and become fairly well known."

"I see. Yes! as you explain it, there certainly is an opening in that direction, but forgive me for saying that the position seems too subordinate for

your talent. Why should you not sing yourself? You would be better paid, and it seems to me that you are very well fitted to do so!"

Hope shook her head with pathetic candour.

"No! My voice is not good enough. I am a fair amateur, but most people can find friends to sing for them quite as well as I could do, and if they hire help at all, they want something better—a beautiful voice like Minnie Caldecott's, for instance. As you said yourself the day I arrived, it is a fastidious age, and mediocrity cannot hope for a success."

"Did I say that? What a singularly unhappy remark! You must forgive it, please, because of course I had no idea what was in your mind. I don't think, however, that you ought to use the word 'mediocre'! It is more a question of appropriateness. Your voice may not be suited for big entertainments, and to speak quite frankly, I can hardly imagine your facing such an ordeal. But surely there are quieter ways of setting to work. What about children, now—children's parties? My little nieces have a party every year, and it is a serious business to find a change from the everlasting conjuror and magic lantern. Could you not find some songs which they would like to hear?"

He looked at her inquiringly, and Hope stood still in the middle of the lane and stared at him with kindling eyes. "*Children!*" she whispered, beneath her breath. "*Children!*"

It was the prettiest thing in the world to see the different emotions chase each other over the sweet face. Surprise first, and puzzled questioning, the gradual dawning of an idea, the flush of radiant triumph.

"Children's parties! Oh, what an idea! what a brilliant, brilliant idea! Mr. Merrilies, how can I ever thank you! I don't know why I did not think of it myself, for it is the very thing I should love above all others, and I believe I could make it a success."

She turned and began to walk rapidly forward, waving her hands and unfolding her programme with characteristic Charrington enthusiasm.

"I know what I will do—I know exactly! I will tell them a story, and sing descriptive little songs at intervals. Theo shall write the words and share in the profits, and the songs shall be set to well-known airs, for children love what they know, and would like to join in the choruses. Oh! it will be charming! A new fairy tale introducing all the dear old characters. The Giant who lives alone in his Castle, and eats up everyone who comes in his way—'Fe-Fo-Fum!' that shall be his song—'Fe-Fo-Fum, I smell the blood of an Englishman!' Can't you hear the deep chords in the bass? Then there must be the Prince, of course, and the most beautiful Princess that ever was seen. . . ."

"With golden hair, and dark blue eyes," put in the listener with a look in his eyes that went unnoticed by his excited companion.

"Yes, yes! and—and a wicked fairy who was not asked to the christening, and a good fairy who undid all her spells. Theo will bring them all in: I will write to her this very night, for there is not a minute to be lost. I shall have no difficulty setting the songs to music, and I should not feel a scrap nervous singing to children. Dear little souls! What fun it will be watching their faces, and hearing them join in the choruses! Oh! what a charming idea! Do you really think anyone would allow me to try?"

"I will give you your first engagement, now, at this moment! My sister will be only too eager to secure you, and she will tell her friends of the new idea. I shall say that your fee is rather high, but that at all costs you must be engaged if she wishes the party to be a success. You must charge a good deal, you know, or people won't think half so much of you!"

Hope looked at him with shy delight.

"Must I? Mr. Merrilies, I am so grateful to you that I don't know what to say. You have made me feel so happy. If I get on at all, it will be your doing!"

"It will be nothing of the kind. I simply mentioned the word children, and you pounced upon it, and evolved the whole scheme. There is no gratitude due to me," declared Ralph Merrilies sturdily.

At that moment voices broke upon the ear, and turning a corner they saw the three remaining ladies of the party walking back to meet them. Avice asked Mr. Merrilies some question about the carriage, while Truda turned to Hope and studied her face with gloomy eyes.

"You look very jubilant. What is the matter?"

"I've got an idea!"

"Goodness! is that all? I've got hundreds." She fell a few steps behind the others, and added resentfully: "You have managed to keep him well to yourself at any rate. He hasn't spoken a word to me all day!"

[*To be continued.*]

A DAINTY FLOWER-BEDECKED CHARIOT DRAWN BY GOATS.

Mail Carts.

By J. E. WHITBY.

Illustrated from Photographs by Colette, Spa

SUMMER is the time for flowers. Then Flora reigns supreme, and in garden and hedgerow her subjects run riot, making the earth a lovely place with their bright colours and graceful forms. It is when we watch the no less beautiful butterflies hovering over them, that the charming French simile comes to mind. "The butterfly is a flying flower, the flower a tethered butterfly."

There probably never was a time when flowers played a greater part in daily life than at present. Once they were not thought healthy in a house, and a stiff "bowpot" on the parlour table, with some dried rose leaves and lavender in a quaint jar, were all that was permitted. But flowers nowadays are part of our very existence, our houses are filled with them as are our gardens, and surely our lives must be all the better for the sight of their beauty.

It is to the flowers that we turn for help to express our greatest pleasures; they have a place at every rejoicing, and have become our emblems of happiness; and it is to them we turn, too, in hours of deepest sorrow. They mark our hours of grief, and their presence brings comfort. Flowers, indeed, occupy a unique position. Fit offerings for the proudest Queen, they bloom as generously for the poor as for the rich. Many of us are fortunate enough to have a garden well stocked with the "tethered butterflies" we love, while others are within reach of the country where flowers and the equally lovely leaves and grasses are free to all.

The arrangement of flowers is one specially suited to a girl's light fingers, and with a little practice and some taste, she can soon become very expert. Summer-time brings not only plenty of flowers, but many out-door fêtes, garden parties, and school treats, that follow alas! year after year the same dull round.

The floral competition, which should form such an attractive feature at out-door fêtes, is, it is true, not altogether a new notion, but it is usually kept along recognised lines, which include flower shows, or processions, in which grown-up people and decorated carriages take part. Many parents give during the summer holidays a garden party for young people, and THE GIRL'S REALM would suggest that novel forms of floral competitions should be arranged, for which small prizes might be given. The idea can, of course, be greatly elaborated,

but this paper is devoted specially to showing what can be done by the girls themselves, with little trouble and no expense.

Almost every family nowadays owns a child's mail cart, and the accompanying illustrations and descriptions give some original designs in the decoration of these little carriages that can be easily carried out. The advantage of the mail cart is that it forms a light ambulant frame on which any kind of design can be built up, while it affords a resting place for those little persons whose presence so often adds to the general effect.

One of the most effective ideas at a recent children's festival at Spa, in Belgium, was that of a fishing boat. The foundation was a mail cart, whose sides were covered with stout brown paper, a bow and bowsprit being added, which ensured the boat-like shape. The paper was almost entirely hidden by variegated foliage decorated with flowers. A mast had been erected, and bore the nautical gala bouquet, while a gay flag fluttered from the top. The canvas sail had painted on it a regulation number, and a fishing net hung gracefully suspended. This particular ship must have been in harbour for some time, for the rigging was well wreathed with the creeping smilax, which, if not quite in keeping, at least added to the picturesque effect. Two little fishermen clad in scarlet shirts and tarpaulin hats sat in the boat, whose deck was hidden with flowers, gravely sucking unlighted clay pipes.

Another prize-winning cart was that on which, by means of the finest of twigs and wild grasses, a comfortable nest had been constructed. In this nest sat a very wide-awake-looking bird in a smart bonnet. The frame of the carriage was covered with chrysanthemums, and two huge crinkled paper bows added just the bold note of colour the conception needed.

Perhaps the most attractive design was that in which two little chicks appeared just emerging from the shell. In this case a double cart was used, over which a deck of stout cardboard was laid, with holes to allow the children to sit inside the cart. This flat surface was covered with moss and ferns. The eggs from which two little golden heads peeped forth, decorated with large bows of mauve ribbon, were constructed by means of wire frames covered with white wadding, and popped over the children after they were seated. The tops of the eggs were thrown back as though just opened. Two flower-trimmed masts stood at the head and foot, while a centre wand held on its white crest an airy bell made of pale pink crinkled paper, from which floated long ends of mauve and white ribbon, the clapper being of white and mauve flowers; of the same colour were those that decorated the sides of the cart, while giant fern

A PRETTY FLOWER-MODEL IN THE DESIGN OF A SHIP.

IN THIS PICTURE TWO LITTLE GOLDEN-HAIRED CHICKS CAN BE SEEN EMERGING FROM THE SHELL.

leaves made a graceful border. A prettier idea for Easter Eggs could not have been imagined, and well deserved one of the first prize banners, which Monsieur Le Maire de Warzee, the Director of the Spa fêtes, awarded.

Another extremely effective cart had three goats harnessed to it. In it sat a very pretty Russian girl in the costume of her country, who drove the little flower-bedecked chariot, which she had decorated in the French colours — blue, white, and red—a compliment to the Franco Russian Alliance. A small boy on a grey pony (that looked surprised to find himself in his old age wearing a wreath and necklace of pink roses) acted as a guard of honour to the little Russian lady. His costume was the genuine Montenegrin dress: a mass of gold embroidery. Now and then he looked proudly at the pistol stuck in his belt.

Clever fingers had erected a very good imitation mushroom over another cart. This mushroom was made of wadding lined with the ever useful pink paper. Under it sat a tiny elf in a green cloak with a pointed hood drawn round his face, like the gnomes of German stories.

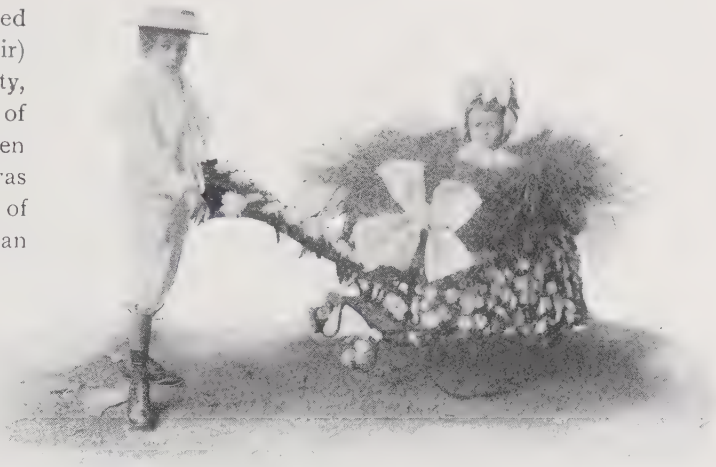
A simple and easy model for any family which boasts a youthful carpenter, was that representing a hayfield, the design of which was mounted on a board running on four rough wheels. This had been, by means of flowers and hay, turned by the ingenious little competitors into a miniature hayfield, and there, clad in quaint country costumes, they sat under a poke of hay enjoying a rustic meal.

Another design was that of the "Belgica," a ship liberally trimmed with wadding, to represent the snow and ice

A BRAVE LITTLE FLOWER-SHIP, BUILT OF VARIEGATED FOLIAGE.
On deck can be seen two sturdy fishermen, gravely sucking unlighted clay pipes.

that the brave ship would encounter on her voyage to the south Pole. The flower-model held three little passengers.

A sleigh mounted on wheels (which might well be copied by aid of a chair) was extremely pretty, because a swan of flowers had been affixed, which was driven by a pair of ribbons. The swan is easily made with a little straw, and covered closely with flowers.



A FLOWER-NEST CONTRIVED FROM TWIGS AND WILD GRASSES.
In the nest sits a very wide-awake bird in a smart bonnet.

One illustration here shows how a small hand-cart, used for gardening purposes, can be converted into an excellent flower cart. In Belgium, where dogs are always in use for drawing carts, it was easy to find one to serve as horse, but in England it might be more difficult, unless some big pet will prove sufficiently docile between the shafts.

While on the subject of floral competitions, I may say that nothing is prettier than a decorated parasol competition. Such a one would afford older girls a chance of showing their taste and skill. Any parasol will do for the purpose, and a covering of tarlatan under the flowers not only gives a light look, but preserves the parasol. Cotton ones answer as well as silk for foundations. Tall walking sticks, such as were used by the "Incroyables," look pretty decked with flowers and ribbons; a part of an old fishing-rod, painted or covered, would not make a bad substitute if a long stick were not forthcoming. Hoops, too, make an excellent frame for floral designs; strings of flowers can be stretched across them, or they can be filled in solidly with Coronation

A SWAN FLOWER CART.
This is really a sleigh mounted on wheels, the swan being made in straw, and covered [illegible] with flowers

designs. Tarlatan, it may be suggested, is often a useful adjunct when flowers fail from wet, and is light and full of colour.

These few hints may perhaps afford a little variety in young people's garden parties, or they might form a novel feature for a country flower-show or bicycle gymkana. Arranged as a school entertainment—perhaps for a charity—a charming result might be obtained.

A GAILY-DECKED HAND-CART.

CALLING ON THE BUMBLE BEE.

I called to see
The Bumble Bee
Last Monday afternoon;
The sky was pink—
The month, I think,
Was either May or June.

Her dwelling hive
Is number five,
Whenever she's at home;
And you're aware
She combs her hair
With a kind of honeycomb!

I found the bell
And rang it well
(A blue bell 'twas, you know),
A voice replied:
"Please walk inside—
The ceiling's rather low."

I wiped my hat
Upon the mat;
"The weather's warmish, but
Tell me," said I,
"The reason why
The front door isn't shut?"

The Bumble Bee
Replied, "Dear me,
How very dull you are!
You see, I am
A-making jam,
And so the door's a-jar."

A. L. HARRIS.

HER FIRST DAY AT SCHOOL.

From a Drawing by F. Y. CORY.

SCHOOL GIRL FRIENDSHIPS

By NORAH DREW.

Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

"AT school, friendship is a passion. It entrances the being; it tears the soul. All loves of after-life can never bring its rapture, or its wretchedness; no bliss so absorbing, no pangs of jealousy or despair so crushing and so keen." So Lord Beaconsfield wrote of school friendships in his book "Coningsby." All that he says is very true, and has been the experience of girls, even more, I should say, than of boys.

As I take up my pen to write on School-Girl Friendships, I recall to mind the many and various friendships that I have known. Some I have watched from beginning to end, for school-girl friendships are not always long-lived. I use the word "various" purposely, because they do vary very considerably, and if friendships were marketable articles, some would be dear at sixpence three-farthings the dozen, while others would be worth their weight in gold. Some are little more than fancies; some are foolish and flitting; others are firm and fast.

Do not mistake devoteeism for friendship; the former is merely the overgrown child of Fancy; it is a blind following, a foolish worship. We are all acquainted with the ardent devotee. This girl lurks about in corners, to try and catch a sight of the ideal being that her imagination has placed on a pedestal far and away above everyone else. She gazes raptuously from a distance at the back of the adored one, if she cannot obtain a front view; she places anonymous offerings of flowers at the shrine of her idol; she is in the seventh heaven of delight when a smile is bestowed upon her; she is reduced to tears of misery if that smile is withheld.

I have seen girls rush with frantic haste to be the first to sit in the chair just vacated by the person for whom they had conceived one of these violent attachments. The school-girl is a perfect and accomplished devotee. Perhaps because she has a loving heart, quick to respond to any kindness.

The foolish and flitting friendship is really an amusing thing to watch. It leaps and bounds along with gigantic strides, it rises to boiling point in no time, and then -after bubbling and gurgling, and making itself very apparent—it boils away. While it lasts it is distinctly pleasant, but after it has evaporated there is left behind an uncomfortable feeling of dissatisfaction at having lavished love, and confidences, and gifts, in so extravagant a

"SHE GAZES RAPTUROUSLY FROM A DISTANCE AT THE BACK OF THE ADORED ONE."

fashion upon one for whom we no longer entertain any special feeling of affection.

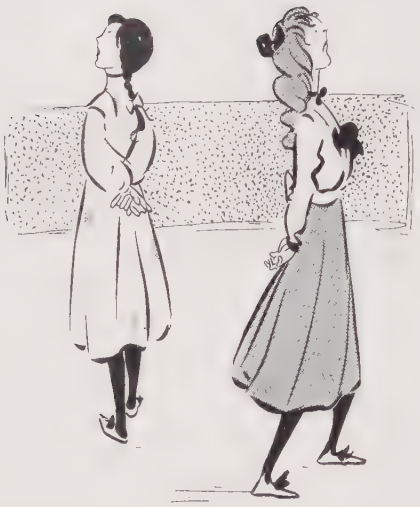
Take an instance. Two girls meet for the first time at school; they become friendly almost immediately, they cling together, and to such an extent that other would-be friends keep at a distance. The girl-friends give each other costly presents, exchange invitations to visit in the holidays, ask that they may share the same bedroom, and appear to all to entertain the greatest attachment for one another. Then what happens? The next term you hear that the friends are hardly ever seen together, indeed, that they are scarcely on speaking terms. A little later they will tell you that they positively dislike each other. Thus the fitful friendship of these two girls dies a violent death. Such instances could easily be multiplied.

These impulsive friendships have been described as being so warm that they are no sooner taken up than they are put down again. Cowper speaks of "friends adopted with a schoolboy's haste," but we must not let boys have all the credit of such precipitancy, for their sisters are as often hasty in their choice of friends. A true school-friendship, is a very different thing; it does not rush along at break-neck speed, but is often so gradual in its growth that, looking back, we find it difficult to trace the beginning of our friendship. It is well that it should be so, since, as Young says:

> "Friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,
> Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core."

You do not want to give your confidences, to unburden the secrets of your hearts to one whom you know will make them public property the next day. The Talmud says:—"Thy friend has a friend, and thy friend's friend a friend. Be discreet." And this is excellent advice to act upon.

"THE TWO GIRLS BECOME FRIENDLY ALMOST IMMEDIATELY; THEY CLING TOGETHER."



"THE NEXT YOU HEAR IS THAT THE TWO FRIENDS ARE SCARCELY ON SPEAKING TERMS."

It is a mystery to some people how certain others ever became friends; they seem so opposite in every way; they seem to have no tastes in common. But then what two things can be more unlike than a hook and eye? Yet they fit into each other wonderfully well, and work together in a perfect harmony. So it is with friends.

"GIRLS HAD THE SAME FEELINGS SIXTY YEARS AGO."

"I cannot think what she can see in that uninteresting girl, that she should make a friend of her," you sometimes hear people say. But why concern ourselves about these unaccountable friendships? What a mercy it is that tastes differ, that we do not all seize upon the same friend! How embarrassing for her, and how unsatisfactory for us!

A difference in age is no barrier to friendship. There have been, and are, some beautiful and helpful friendships between girls and those much older than themselves. "How can I ever thank you enough?" said a grateful child to one who had been sitting by her bedside, trying to soothe and comfort her during some hours of pain. "Never mind the thanks," was the reply, "just love me a little bit, that is all I want." The child throwing her arms round her friend's neck whispered: "I love you better than anyone else in the world I think, except mother," and that love has kept fresh and warm through the years that have passed, for she is no longer a child.

"A DIFFERENCE IN AGE IS NO BARRIER TO FRIENDSHIP."

Judging from the following story, I suppose girls had the same feelings sixty years ago as they have to-day. A small school-girl loved with all the passion and strength of her little soul one of the grown-up daughters of the lady principal. Her cup of joy was full when she was allowed to sit next to the adored one at meals, and on one occasion (how well she

"THEY LIVE UNDER THE SAME ROOF."

remembers it to this day!) prompted by an affectionate desire to hold her friend's hand, she surreptitiously felt for it under the table cloth, but the result was the unpleasant discovery that the schoolfellow on the other side had already secured possession of it. This was more than she could bear, and in her jealousy and disappointment she pinched, and pinched hard too, what she supposed to be the intruder's hand. Imagine how great was her mortification and shame, when she found that she had missed the mark, and that it was Miss Maria's dear hand she was punishing in this vindictive and painful manner!

Many a firm school friendship has grown out of a genuine dislike. Girls have often said in speaking of some particular friend, "I couldn't bear her when I first knew her." How or when the love began to grow they cannot explain, but that it did grow they have no doubt whatever. The contact is so constant, and the companionship so close between girls at school, that they have abundant opportunities of seeing the best, as well as the worst, of each other. They live under the same roof, grow together, have the same interests, and there springs out of these things a feeling of relationship, which, clinging to them through life, binds them very closely to one another. Said a lady to an old school-friend whom she met after a long absence, "our school friendships were so firm and true, that I believe if we did not meet for fifty years, we should still feel the same towards each other."

"I like you," said one little girl to another, after the manner of school-girls, which is outspoken.

"And I like you," was the answer, "so there is no love lost between us."

The other laughed. "I think you say that when people don't like each other," said she.

But her friend could not see it.

"If I love you, and you love me," she argued, "where is the love that is lost?"

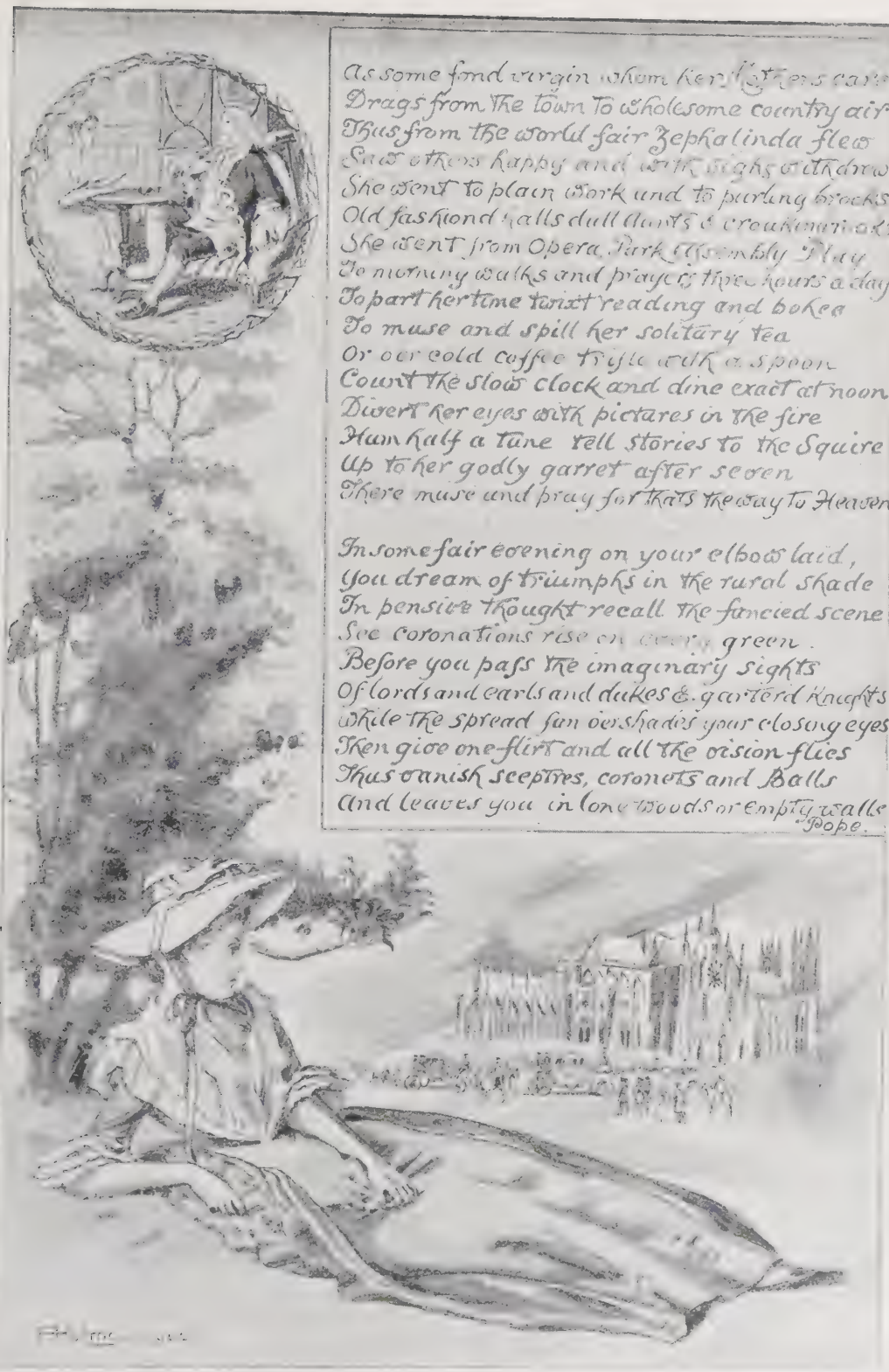
By this time they had got out of their depth. Anyhow, it did not matter, they thought, for they loved each other, and that was enough. So they clasped hands, these two, and trotted through their school life, side by side.

It is the thought of such friendships as these, which are now perhaps only sacred memories, that fills life, for some of us, with a joy which is all our own.

"WHAT A MERCY IT IS THAT TASTES DIFFER;"

"THAT WE DO NOT ALL SEIZE UPON THE SAME FRIEND."

To
Miss Blount
on her leaving town
after the
Coronation
1715



As some fond virgin whom her Mothers care
Drags from the town to wholesome country air
Thus from the world fair Zephalinda flew
Saw others happy and with sighs withdrew
She went to plain work and to purling brooks
Old fashiond halls dull Lords & croud romances
She went from Opera Park Assembly Play
To morning walks and prayers three hours a day
To part her time twixt reading and bohea
To muse and spill her solitary tea
Or o'er cold coffee trifle with a spoon
Count the slow clock and dine exact at noon
Divert her eyes with pictures in the fire
Hum half a tune tell stories to the Squire
Up to her godly garret after seven
There muse and pray for that's the way to Heaven

In some fair evening on your elbow laid,
You dream of triumphs in the rural shade
In pensive thought recall the fancied scene
See coronations rise on every green.
Before you pass the imaginary sights
Of lords and earls and dukes & garterd Knights
While the spread fan o'ershades your closing eyes
Then give one flirt and all the vision flies
Thus vanish sceptres, coronets and Balls
And leaves you in lone Woods or empty walls
Pope.

THE YOUNG KING OF SPAIN, TOUCHING THE GOSPELS, SWEARS TO MAINTAIN THE CONSTITUTION.

From an Original Drawing by D. Colbron Pearse.

The Enthronement of the King of Spain.

By ALFRED PEARSE,

Special Artist of "The Sphere."

MADRID, the city of sunshine and pleasure, is awakened at early morn on May 17th by the reveille and military bands marching through the gorgeously-decorated streets to the Palacio Real, where they play the national anthem of Spain in honour of the Royal youth who is to-day to emerge from the seclusion of his careful training under the guidance of his loving mother, not only to man's estate, but to be king of a renowned land and people.

Yesterday, in an audience with the ministers, who had so ably seconded her noble efforts, the Queen Regent formally resigned her onerous duties as Regent of the State. The scene was dignified and impressive, but at the same time pathetic. Her Majesty concluded her farewell address with the assertion that the loyalty of Spain to her beloved son "Will be the completest recompense of his mother, who, having devoted her life to the fulfilment of her duties, begs God to protect her son in order that, emulating the glories of his ancestors, he may succeed in giving peace and prosperity to the noble people over whom he is to reign."

The scene at the Estacion del Norte when the Princes arrived was brilliant, marked attention being bestowed by the people on H.R.H. The Duke of Connaught. I was allowed to sketch the King starting from the Palace for the review, which sketch appears in THE GIRL'S REALM. Running down the stairs the lithe boy-King stopped at the door to return the salutes of his officers, then vaulted easily into the saddle and, followed by his riding tutor, staff officers and foreign princes, set off to the review, where a pleasing incident occurred. A young soldier stepped up to King Alfonso, and, saluting, asked boldly to be made a corporal. With a genial smile on his face the young monarch replied, "I am not King yet; you must ask my mother." Nothing abashed the soldier approached the Queen with the same request. "Certainly," was the reply, "and I will embroider the company flag myself."

Another amusing incident occurred. A little child, recognising his father amongst the bandsmen of the engineers, rushed up to him. In spite of protests he marched, or rather trotted, by the side of his father, clinging tightly to his tunic during the march past. His Majesty refused to allow a guard to remove the happy little lad, a kingly action that delighted the vast concourse of people.

By the courteous permission of Excmo. Sr. Duque de Sotomayor, the Lord Chamberlain, who controlled the ceremonies, I was allowed to witness the private ceremony of the investiture of the King with the Order of the Garter by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught. Punctually at 11 A.M. the procession left the rooms occupied by the Duke of Connaught and traversed the two sides of the lofty glazed corridor that surrounds the courtyard to the Queen's room, where the ceremony was performed.

But greater than all ceremonies was the gorgeous pageant, the procession from the Palacio Real to the Congress. The hot sun adds glitter to the gilded ornaments and heightens the vivid red and yellow colouring of the elaborate decorations, though palm trees placed along the streets give rest to the eyes and form a slight shade for the thousands who line the route. Soldiers, as well as spectators, are carried away overcome by the heat. But hark! an expectant hum rises from the throng and the Royal grooms appear, followed by the mounted kettledrums, trumpeters and mace bearer; next Royal horses, gaily caparisoned and plumed, held by quaintly costumed grooms. Then closely follows a bronze coach containing

the Heralds or Kings of Arms; next a long line of magnificent antique coaches, drawn by fine horses led by richly-clad grooms, which contain members of the Royal Family, grandees, etc., some accompanied by Royal escorts.

Now lusty vivas proclaim the approach of the "Coach of the Royal Crown," and it comes bearing in it the King, Queen Christina, and Infanta Maria Theresa. This gorgeous gold equipage is drawn by eight splendid white horses, richly caparisoned in crimson and gold with large white plumes; beside the coach ride four officers. Aides-de-camp and a Royal escort bring to a close one of the most magnificent pageants ever conceived.

To the King the scene must have seemed a long vista of enthusiastic crowds, for, in addition to the crowds lining the streets, every window and balcony was gaily draped and packed with people of all classes, who waved handkerchiefs, threw flowers, and shouted vivas until they could no longer see their young monarch. Guns saluted and bells clanged out a merry welcome. The King, proud and happy, acknowledged with salutes the loyal greetings of his people.

The notabilities of Spain and Royal guests from all parts of the world had meanwhile crowded to the artistically decorated Congress, where all except the Deputies were in court dress. A daïs with three steps had been erected facing the tribune seats, and covered with magnificent tapestries of priceless value. Two crimson and gold covered tables were placed to the King's right, bearing the massive crown and crystal-headed sceptre, also the cross and gospels. At the lowest step two gilt lions stood, cast from captured cannon.

THE KING OF SPAIN RIDES OUT TO THE GREAT STATE REVIEW.
Specially drawn for "The Girl's Realm" by the "Sphere" Artist, A. Pearse.

As the procession of coaches arrived, their occupants, alighting, entered the Congress through the Saloon (the sides of which were lined with elegantly-dressed ladies and brilliantly uniformed gentlemen), where they took up their appointed places on the daïs around the two Royal chairs. A rumour that an attempt had been made on the life of H.M. the King created great anxiety, that gave way to relief when the

President announced it to be incorrect. Almost immediately the Queen Regent, resplendent in pearl-grey and a coronet of diamonds and pearls, with a white lace mantilla attached, entered, bowing to all with exquisite and queenly grace. Then through the rich crimson velvet draperies of the canopied doorway at the back of the daïs, amid hearty acclamations, the young King entered, dressed in the uniform of a Captain-General, and wearing the Order of the Golden Fleece. He bowed repeatedly, then said, "Be seated." He himself took his seat by the side of his beloved mother, who watched his every movement.

His Majesty then removed his right glove, holding it and his white-plumed helmet in his left hand, and the assembly rose again, as the President, the Excmo. Sr. Marquis de la Vega de Armigo, who stood on the King's right, extended the Gospels. Over them the Royal youth, with earnest expression, placed his hand, saying in a clear voice, "Juro por Dios, sobre los Santos Evangelios guardar la Constitucion y las leyes. Si asi lo haciere, Dios me lo premie, y si no, me lo demande," whilst Excmo. Sr. the Duque de Bivona and another secretary of the Congress held up in front of the King the book containing the formula of the oath. The President then acknowledged the acceptance of the oath, this concluding the simple but impressive ceremony.

THE LATEST PORTRAIT OF THE KING OF SPAIN, TOGETHER WITH HIS SIGNATURE.

The Queen-mother turned to her son and smiled her approval of the dignified manner in which he had performed his part of the ceremony. Amid continued cries of "Long live the King," the young King passed out on his way to the church.

The procession reformed and wended its way through the poorer districts, where the

welcome he received was, if anything, heartier than that which had already greeted him. Near the church of San Fransisco el Grande some girl-workers in cigar and cigarette factories let loose doves and threw flowers into and around the Royal coach.

On their arrival at the door of the church the Royal party were received by thirty-one bishops and cardinals. This scene in the cathedral and the subsequent solemn service was one that can never be forgotten. The Te Deum was sung by a choir of two hundred voices; and a fitting conclusion to this grandly impressive ceremony was the sacred song of thanksgiving. As the last strains of the music died away the Royal party left the cathedral and returned once more to the Palace. There from the balcony the enthroned King acknowledged the acclamations of the populace.

His Majesty's first proclamation to the people was received with great favour; its concluding paragraph reads: "If Providence aids me, if the Spanish people maintain the support accorded to my august mother during the Regency, as I cherish the hope that they will, Spaniards shall know that I am not only the first in the hierarchy, but that I am so in devotion to the fatherland and in untiring attention to whatever may contribute to the peace, the grandeur, and the felicity of the Spanish nation." We sincerely hope this may be fulfilled, and that a reign begun by a day of auspicious auguries will continue a peaceful and glorious one.

Madrid is now a perfect babel of patois; quaintly dressed people from all parts of Spain mingle with the ordinary throng. The endless flow of sightseers who surge and drive through the gaily-decorated streets seem never to tire of waiting for the illuminations, the sight of which fully repays them. Madrid this night is a perfect fairyland of coloured lights and lanterns, which deepen the rich tones of old draperies and the tapestries that hang from balconies. The city is a panorama of brilliance and vivid colouring. But weary at last of pleasure and shouting, the thousands wend their way homewards. So ends a momentous day, omen of the future happiness and prosperity of the Spanish nation.

OUR GRAND VOTING COMPETITION.

PRIZES WON BY COLONIAL AND FOREIGN GIRLS.

My readers will remember the Great Voting Competition about which they were so keen at the beginning of this year. This keenness spread to the most distant parts of the world, from which my girls sent large numbers of votes. In this competition over 300,000 votes, each given by a girl under the age of twenty-five, were sent in.

The following is the list of Foreign and Colonial prize winners:—

1st—Louise de Pourtalès, Cange, St. Avertin, Indre et Loire, France—Lace handkerchief.

2nd—Rose Merland, 20, Avenue Thiers, Grenoble, Isere, France—Lace handkerchief.

3rd—Kathleen Cunyngham Greene, British Legation, Berne, Switzerland—Post-card album.

4th—Jessie Hale, Brantford, Ontario, Canada—Post-card album.

5th—Marie Beck, Rondebosch, near Cape Town, South Africa—Post-card album.

Consolation prizes have been sent to each of the following:—

Winnie Turner, Tourelles, Montriond, Lausanne, Switzerland.
Dora Prunetti, Palazzo Odescalchi, Piazza S. Apostoli, Rome, Italy.
Adele Fialla, Schwedengasse 12, Mahren, Brunn.
Madeline Coeuret de St. Georges, La Coute, par Gramat, Lot, France.
Laura Cassels, 93, Bedford Road, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
Dolly Duncan, Rue Parmentier, 38, Neuilly sur Seine, près Paris.
Alice Grant Rosman, McKinnon Parade, N. Adelaide, South Australia.
Vera H. Doerstling, Stieberstrasse 23, Bautzen, Germany.
Adèle Illner, Rue Paravis 53, Marseille, France.
Clarice Sybil Ainslie, Malans, Bedford, Cape Colony.
Suzanne Trasenter, Ougree, Pres Liège, Belgium.
Florence Mullen, Marston Road, Karachi, India.
Hélène Robesco, 6, Strada Rotari, Bucarest, Roumania.

I hope to have a Competition occasionally, in which the rapidly increasing number of girl readers in the Colonies may take part. I am always delighted to hear from my girls abroad.

In the making of which girls (possibly with the help of brothers) would find most interesting occupation.

By ADA STERLING.

Illustrated by C. A. Vanderhoof.

Often the real secret of the effective laying out of a garden will lie in utilizing the materials—cedar, stone, etc.—that distinguish the locality; in the beauty of the incidental tree, around the trunk of which a cosy seat may be built, or among the branches of which a rustic platform may be arranged. Shade, seclusion, some favourite view to be commanded—these are the main points to be considered in choosing the site for the garden seat, the character of which must be decided by its surroundings and the object for which it is built. A seat of this kind should never be employed, however, without a reason a defined use. Nor should the garden be overloaded with features.

For small grounds the site of the seat, either portable or fixed, will be chosen primarily for shade, generally in or under an available tree. If the design to be carried out be an imposing tea-house or a semicircular seat overhung with trees, it should greet the eye from the principal path or avenue of trees or curving about the end of a velvety lawn. An arbour or tea-house may be placed with fine effect upon a western slope rather than upon a flat surface. In a small, restricted garden, a long seat sometimes is advantageously placed against a retaining wall, often obnoxious to the view, where the long surface must be broken if a pleasing effect is to be obtained, yet where the training of creepers is not always feasible.

One of the simplest forms of the portable garden seat suitable to a site such as has just been

THE SITE OF THIS SEAT WILL BE CHOSEN PRIMARILY FOR SHADE.

A LONG SEAT AGAINST A WALL.
This often breaks up the ugly appearance of a long wall, which it is perhaps impossible to beautify in any other way.

described is of rectangular form, but having the front edge of the seat curved and the squareness relieved by the graceful lines of the panelled back, the curved front, and elaborated ends. The divisions of the back are varied, the centre having a pierced ornament, and those on the sides being filled in with turned spindles. The outlines of this settle are so simple as to make the design a feasible one for making by the "handy" home mechanic. Where greater solidity or simplicity is desired, the panels of the back may be made of good narrow tongued and grooved boards one-half inch thick. Or ordinary beaded wainscoting may be used unless a pierced centre back panel is desired. Where this can be obtained, the ends of the seat should be made of one plank; otherwise of four pieces four and a half inches wide, tongued and grooved, but not beaded.

Only time-seasoned or thoroughly kiln-dried wood should be used in the construction of such seats, and they should be put together strongly in every part. Where seats of timber require to be painted, the novice must beware of using crude greens, yellows, or scarlet, which colours are a blemish on the landscape, and nowhere more objectionable than in the small garden. Weathered effects that may be obtained by the use of brown stains are to be preferred in all instances.

Tree seats and observatories in which the children of the house as well as the visitor find constant pleasure are among the best forms of garden retreats, and are especially appropriate where the earth presents an uneven surface. Let us suppose a suitable, wide-armed old tree stands upon a slope of which, if graded, the natural beauty would be spoiled. To allow the tree to remain would hardly meet the approval of the purist in landscape gardening who is considering the development of the grounds about. To uproot it and grade the slope would be costly as well as disfiguring. Its position, however, makes feasible the building of an observation platform at once picturesque and comfortable, and though the structure does not obstruct the view from the higher ground, it provides a roomy and shady resting-place for the enjoyment of a quiet book or a lazy day-dream. Such an observatory should be stained to harmonize with the bark of the tree around which it is built, and, where possible, creepers should be trained about its principal supports. The structure should be made of rustic (cedar) sticks and posts, with floor of boards supported upon light cedar posts.

A convenient willow or oak of good size may be utilized by building half round its base a simple timber or rustic seat, from one end of which a spiral stairway leads up among the branches. Here a light platform of seasoned plank may be wedged between the strong boughs, and a rustic railed back of cedar sticks may be arranged above a substantial seat formed of a single wide board, stained to harmonize with its surroundings.

A low seat built round a tree, and one that yields views from three sides, is particularly adapted for placing either round a tree that stands upon a knoll or in the centre of a smooth lawn. Its contour is particularly pleasing arranged as first suggested. It in no way injures the tree it surrounds, though affording an admirable rest under its umbrageous limbs. The special merits of the triple-sided seat when well made are ample room and a lightness of construction combined with strength. By examining the full accompanying plan of this triple seat it will be seen how, while strongly put together, an

appearance of lightness is gained by the open design of the back.

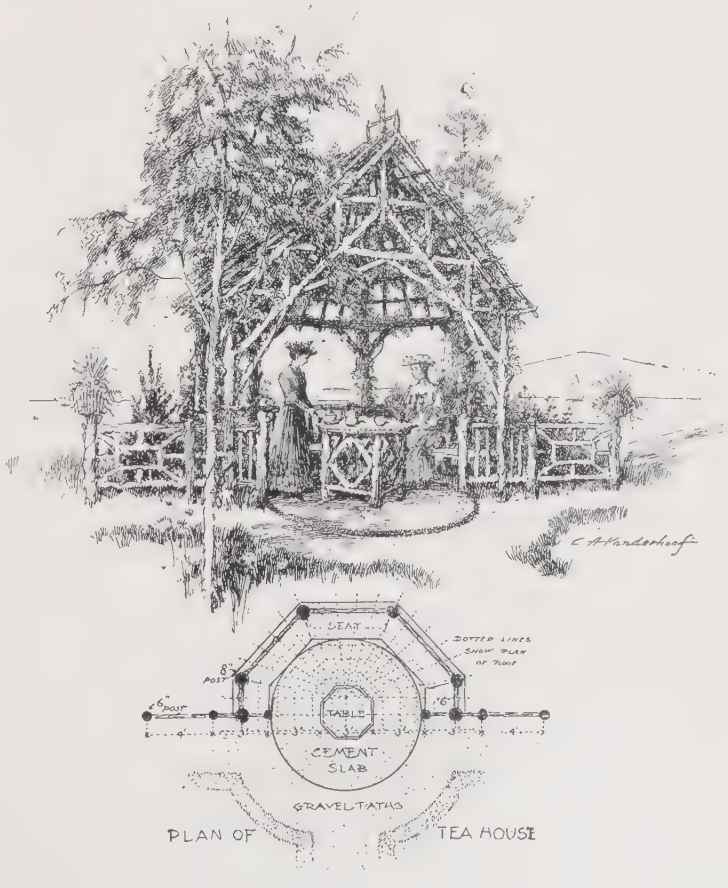
Roughly estimated, the cost of material for this seat (white pine) would amount to £1, to which must be added the cost of slight mill-work (such as the sawing out of the tops), amounting to about five shillings. The complete cost of the work, including the wages of the carpenter (where one is employed), and for painting, should not exceed £3. The three end pieces of the design should be made out of one light plank two feet eight inches wide. The seats require board seven-eighths of an inch thick. The structure should be built free of the tree. A space of three inches should be allowed between them. One-third of this triple seat and part of its back should be made detachable from the rest, in order that the whole may be removed when repairs become necessary, and that the structure may be stored during the winter.

For the wide lawn in more commodious grounds not too elegantly kept to suppress the natural beauty of the landscape, the cedar tea-house makes an ideal retreat. A thing of rustic branches, of sturdy posts, and balustrades of cedar, it appears equally graceful upon flat or sloping surfaces, with wide spaces about it, or may be set becomingly even in grounds no larger in area than an acre.

The approximate cost of cedar sufficient to build a rustic house such as is here illustrated is £3. The arbour posts, twelve feet long, will cost from tenpence to two shillings apiece. Ten of these will be required for the building. A practical carpenter of simple skill would require one week in which to complete the structure. The cement platform for which plan is given may be discarded if desired, and a portable table substituted for the octagon rustic stand shown in the illustration. If the table is to be built, however, its diameter should not exceed three feet.

The front gable, open spaced rafters, and rustic balustrades of this charming summer-house have all the picturesque quality of the leafy pergola of Italy, but, like its Italian model, to make the house truly effective it should be creeper-draped and have shrubbery not too far away to form a soft background for it.

The last of the several designs represents a semicircular seat set upon a cement platform and rounding about a shallow lily pool. A costlier plan than any of the preceding ones, if carried out exactly, it may be varied, nevertheless, to suit individual tastes or to meet the requirements of the very modest purse. The plan as originally designed calls for the services of an experienced mason and builder or carpenter, who can construct the stone piers, lay the platform and well, and build the seat and sun-dial. The last may be used only where the seat faces south. If necessarily built to face north, east, or west, the place of the dial must be given to a vase or tub of plants, or to some carved figure for



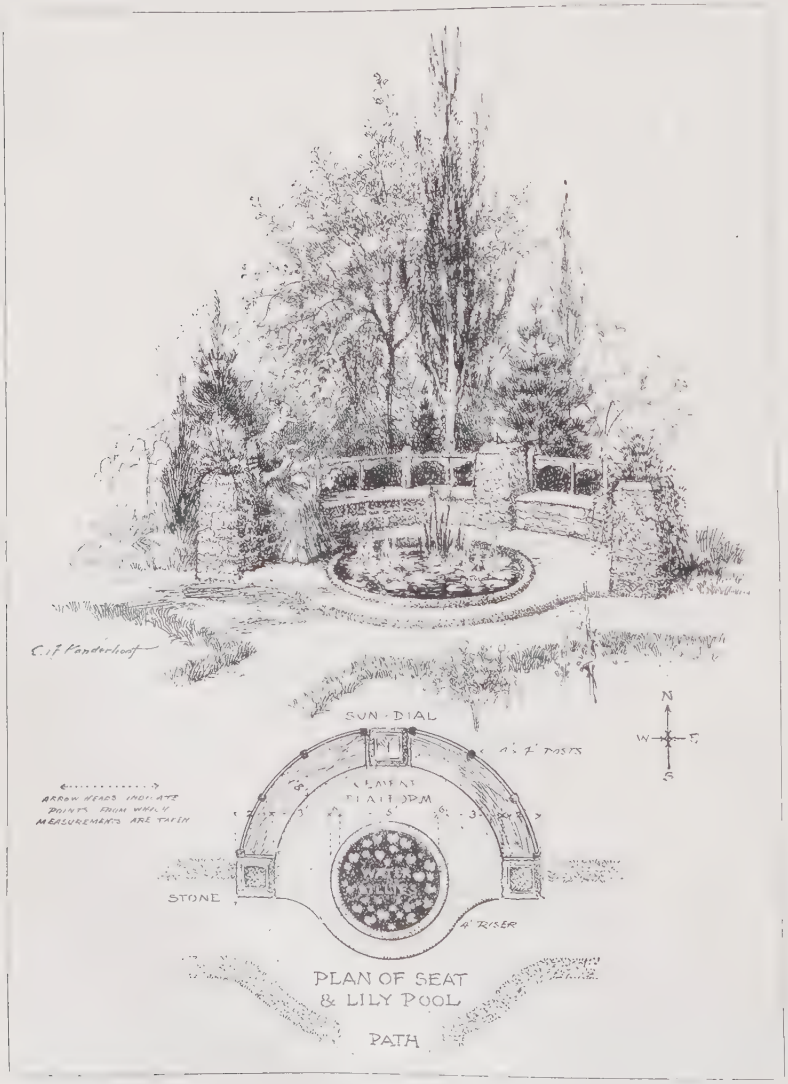
A CEDAR TEA-HOUSE MAKES AN IDEAL RETREAT.

The suggestion for this house was got in Italy.

which the central pier would serve excellently well as a pedestal.

If local stone is available and this used in the rough, the building of a seat of this character will prove comparatively inexpensive. The plan of the lily pool may be abandoned in favour of a circular flower-bed. Again, if stone is unavailable, the entire seat, together with piers, may be made of a combination of good boards and rustic branches. In the original plan the semicircular seat and piers are made of stone cemented over, with adjustable wooden seats and posts carefully fitted and set over the stone piers, but which may be removed during the winter and re-painted or renewed as required.

Because of the variety of ways in which such a plan may be developed, an estimate of the cost is difficult to make. Where local stone may be secured without the cost of cartage a material saving will result. The building of the stone piers may even be accomplished by the clever amateur who will closely follow the accompanying plan. The services of an expert mason will be needed for the building of the platform or basin, however, and the cost of this, together with that of the necessary materials, would be from £8 to £10. Where the platform is to be dispensed with and a circular flower-bed is substituted for the lily pond, which may be made by any amateur gardener, the cost of the stone seat alone would amount to little more than would the necessary materials for an ordinary seat of wood, the chief expense for this portion being for the labour of building.



A SEMI-CIRCULAR SEAT, LOOKING ON TO A LILY POOL.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the utilizing and, at the same time, the beautifying of small grounds are often a matter of small expense of time or money, once the subject has been given thoughtful attention. Garden seats, arbors, pavilions, or tree-rests for those who love the open air, are of great value, and help us to avoid the overcrowding of the grounds with flower-beds. The multiplying of the neatest of flower-bordered walks is to be deplored, too, if these forbid a wandering out under the shade of a tree, or to some little knoll from which a favourite view is to be obtained. Though "the breath of flowers is far sweeter in the air, where it comes and goes like the warbling of music," yet, says an old writer, "nothing is more pleasant to the eye than green grass kept finely shorn," especially when "bordered by a stately hedge."

Author of "Journeyman Love," "When Letitia Rides Abroad," etc.

Illustrated by Frances Ewan.

I.

On my old-fashioned bureau by the window of a green London square there is a long pearl-grey kid glove with quaint fancy stitching in silver. The end of the glove is scalloped and "pinked" with a double flounce of pearl-grey silk. It has a faint scent of rose-water, which is the odour of kingly state, even as the rose is the flower of kings. By the glove is a little gilt model of the Coronation Chair in which Queen Victoria sat, and on the chair a tiny crown. It is not a sovereign's crown, but to me it has so delicate a value that I scarcely dare to take it out of the casket made for these, my three relics, and given to me by one who is very dear to me. They signify to me the moment not only of the most wonderful public pageant I have ever witnessed, but the moment when I, an unskilled, wistful, ingenuous young person of nineteen, stepped into life in its truest sense.

* * * *

I always wanted to *live*. That was my great ambition, and I thought myself (in secret) very superior to other girls who dwelt in the neighbourhood of Durham, where I was brought up. But now I know that all these girls must have felt as I did, only perhaps they felt in a less degree than I did that almost painful necessity to see and be seen, to love and be loved—in a word, to be intensely happy. I was not unhappy, of course. I was living with my mother and my uncle, Sir Anthony Hawes, who had a large, dull, grand house near the old cathedral city. But there was the rub. It was not *our* house. It was his, and we were his poor relatives. In justice to Uncle Anthony I must say that he never for an instant used such a term of us. But my sensitive little mother, his half-sister and only relation (of whose marriage to a poor soldier in a Highland regiment he had always strongly disapproved), used the words sometimes in a fit of bitter jealousy of other women in the county, who all had their own great parks and could give balls for the introduction into society of successive pink and white daughters in white grenadine. And then, after this little stab at ourselves, in that mood of humility which is a very thin cloak for the sorest kind of pride, my mother (who was so small that she had to stand on tip-toe to kiss my forehead) used to put her arms round me and say, "Don't mind what I say, darling; remember there is no capital in the world worth having except Character."

So, you see, the absence of my wordly possessions was always instilled into me from the beginning. Nevertheless, though I saw no way of getting away from Durham county gatherings into the bigger world, I spent many dreamy moments assuring myself that when the time came I should enjoy the world and show myself at an advantage. In these dreams I was always taking part in great ceremonies and great festivities, always an actor in quaint and delicious intrigue, always the centre of

supreme and concentrated dramatic episode. It made up to me for the bovine attitude of the neighbourhood towards the world and the placidity of my life at Hornstone Abbey, my uncle's place.

I have said that we were dependants on Uncle Anthony's bounty. When he was put out over some childish escapade of mine, or had grown morbid after a letter from his brokers, and declared that Hornstone would have to be sold sooner or later to pay for his funeral and our admission into a pauper asylum, he used to make his own pet joke. Of course as I grew older I didn't mind his scoldings when I brought down the pony or dashed into his plantations after birds' eggs and butterflies, any more than I believed that a loss of twenty pounds on some casual investment would bring him to the workhouse. But the old joke hurt me every time. He used to say, as we sat over dessert: "H'm! h'm! ridiculously poor, ye know; positively f-funny, ye know, Maria. There's only one rhyme for Lostrel and that's 'Wastrel.'" (His slightly Northern accent always made the "a" rhyme to the "o" in our name.)

I could never see the comic side of poverty. It may be beautiful in a certain stern sense. It is rarely, under these circumstances, funny. Therefore every time the joke came I used to clench my hand and look across at my mother, while Cummings, the old butler, would cough, as if apologetically, on behalf of his gruff master, and tip-toe his way out of the room. And then—there was always the same form of procedure; my mother used to lean forward and say "Anthony!" in a low thrilling voice, while her deep eyes asked forgiveness for having committed so sweet and sad a mistake as to marry a fine quixotic soldier who died before his country could acknowledge his service or pension his widow. Upon this my uncle used to rise, drink to my father's memory, offer my mother his arm and pat her hand gently as he took her into the drawing-room.

On one particular evening late in May this had all come to pass in due order, and I saw them leave the dining-room, but I did not follow. I went on to the terrace passionately rebellious against circumstances, and longing to take my mother by the hand and run away into the world, and indeed become a proper "wastrel" once for all.

How vivid it all is to me now! The sun had scarcely set, for we dined at six in those days in the North of England. It was the first of June, and I had worn a sprigged summer muslin for the first time that year. I can feel now the hot grey lichened stone of the terrace under my thin sandal shoes, and see the tulips, like dusky flames, in the shadow of a tree: flames in a vast green couch of shimmering heat. I was brooding, rather than thinking, when I heard steps. To my surprise, my uncle, who never went out of doors after dinner, was bringing my mother towards me. I saw that the evening mails had come, for both of them had letters in their hands. My mother tried to speak, but my uncle waved her aside, and spoke slowly, without stammering.

"Anne Cecilia," he said (he always used the grand manner and both my names on specially formal occasions), "we have arranged that you shall spend a part of the Coronation season in London with your mother's second-cousin, Lady Armyne, as we think the present historical occasion in the capital of your native country is one that you should not miss, and it is possible that you may have the rare opportunity of assisting, directly or indirectly, at the great ceremony to be enacted; I mean the—"

I cut him short with a kind of joyful war-whoop. It spoilt all his fine speeches and he began to stutter — "Cor-cor—" "Coronation!" I cried (though he hated having his words said for him) as I danced up and down the terrace.

Ten minutes later I looked at the grey stone parapet. It seemed suddenly to be all rose colour. I looked at the garden; it shewed like a Court mantle of emerald velvet; at the tulips—they were now like ruby sceptres; at the sweet briars that peeped through the balustrade of the terrace—they all twisted and twirled, and wove themselves into garlands fit for maids of honour to the queen of summer.

We had read of the Court and followed dutifully the great national and constitutional events, the passing away of King William, the interesting accession of the Child Queen. We country girls thrilled to our finger tips to think of her, and listened longingly for any news of her ways, her likes and her dislikes, which might reach us in the far dull North. But to see her; perhaps to hear her voice! The possibility was utterly overwhelming.

* * * *

I went up to London within a week from that evening under the escort of my gay married cousin, Serena Armyne, whom I regarded as a very beautiful, clever elder sister and a fairy godmother rolled into one. She had come North for a county ball, and I joined her at York, whither our pompous and astute Cummings took me.

Uncle Anthony had given me the incredibly extravagant sum of thirty pounds for frocks. I travelled in a grey poplin and a black silk tippet, with a capelet of white braid lace, made by my

mother. Four new gowns tucked away in my trunk seemed indeed wild extravagance for me, the little Lostrel girl of nineteen.

II.

The long, beautiful coach ride from York to London was broken twice by Sir George and Lady Armyne because pretty Cousin Serena declared that over-fatigue was the worst thing for complexions. I was quite content. All the way we either passed or followed other coaches full of the most curious and wonderful persons of all classes, who had "hoarded up" to see the Coronation shows, and were coming to settle down in lodgings in good time to enjoy the sights and theatres. We arrived tolerably travel-stained—my poplin all silvery with dust—at the Armyne's splendid house in Fitzroy Square.

The first few days of that wonderful month of holiday and seething excitement are now an absolute blank. All I remember is that I had to put on my grander frocks every day, and that Cousin Serena expressed great dismay at the shape of my "very bestest" skirt. I pleaded that I had actually spent thirty pounds on new clothes. Her amusement over this economy made me feel at once terribly humble and deliciously wicked. "The old curmudgeon!" she cried, meaning Uncle Anthony, "how badly you manage him! I'll buy you everything I think you want, and send the bills to him. But to begin with I shall make you a present of some hats and a gown for the opera."

Up came the carriage (indeed, we seemed to live in my cousin's comfortable barouche), and away we drove to Regent Street, to a new French milliner at the corner of Conduit Street. We rounded the corner rather sharply and nearly drove into an enormous and rather shabby landau on high springs, in which sat a very grand old lady, who waved her fan at my Cousin Serena.

"My dear Lady Dewbery!" said my cousin, and they chattered for some moments.

"You will find Gilian inside," said the grand old lady, who, I gathered from the emblem on the panels of the landau, was a marchioness, "do tell her I cannot wait."

"We will bring her home, if you like," said my cousin.

So the landau trundled away to Mayfair.

"It is most useful to know Lady Dewbery," said my cousin in an undertone, "for though she is really quite poor she has heaps of influence, and her husband has everything to do with allotting seats in the Abbey, so we must be sugary to her."

It was quite refreshing to find somebody who wasn't a Lostrel suffering from poverty, I thought, as we entered Madame Felice's lovely shop, and I was introduced to Lady Gilian Marcett, who was standing before a glass, with three despairing milliners waiting upon her, and at least a dozen rejected hats on the marble console of the mirror She gave me a sort of half curtsey in the French manner, which frightened me into shyness, for I had only been taught to bow very slightly on introduction. Then she flung herself upon Cousin Serena, and they took so long choosing Lady Gilian's hats that there was very little time to find two for me. All the assistant milliners screamed polite approval as we drove away, I in the blue bonnet, in order that I might look well at tea at old Lady Dewbery's.

We drove all through Bond Street, and everyone seemed to be smiling and bowing; everyone was rich, happy and prosperous. It made me wild to think how rich and happy they were, and it was at this moment that my old Lostrel defiance began to assert itself. Serena and Lady Gilian talked incessantly about people of whom I had, of course, never heard, and they often spoke so that I could not hear.

One name which I heard repeatedly on their lips was that of "Glame." "Poor dear Glame!" said Serena. "Of course something really must be done to keep Glame in order," murmured Lady Gilian subsequently. I puzzled over this, for at times it seemed that "Glame" must be a refractory terrier, and at others a ne'er-do-well younger son. But when I heard "Glame absolutely almost declines to use his privileges at the Coronation," I decided that Glame must be some kind of a man who was excessively foolish.

I should have forgotten to be curious about him any more had I not heard suddenly, "There is Glame!" Lady Gilian's tone was quite excited I thought, and I was wild to learn a little more. We had just reached the end of the long hill that flanks Buckingham Palace and were about to drive past Apsley House to Curzon Street (where Lady Dewbery lived) when there rode smartly at right angles to us a gentleman with dark hair, slight but tall, on a very smart iron-grey horse. Everything about him, from the cut of his gaiters to his whip, was at once modest and distinguished. He was looking straight in front of him very earnestly—not a bit like all the smiling, smirking men of fashion I had seen that afternoon, and if Serena had not waved her small green parasol with its trembling fringes at him, I believe he would never have seen us. I looked at Lady Gilian. She coloured, then she put on a very languid air, and said, "Why, Glame,

how active you are! I hardly recognised you." Which was a hateful untruth, for she saw him first. From that moment I began to dislike her.

Serena introduced me like this: "Lord Glame, this is a little cousin of mine."

I thought she might have said my name, and my Lostrel defiance once more thumped at my heart. I bowed and meant to look over the top of his head, but, instead, I found I had to look straight into his face. Wasn't it curious?

As I looked I said to myself "You are one of the people who will never make me feel small or defiant."

"I haven't a horse of my own, you know, Lady Gilian," he said in answer to her remark; "this is borrowed, and to-day is a half-holiday for me."

He rode with us into the park and we drew up then to watch the Duchess of Kent drive past, and afterwards he came beside us and talked—but generally to Serena. As we went on to tea with the Marchioness, I asked if he was at college in London and why a Wednesday was a holiday instead of Saturday. Serena and Gilian shrieked with pleasure. Afterwards in her boudoir Serena explained that Lord Glame was twenty-five and represented one of the oldest baronies in England, that he was to make a very rich marriage one of these days, but that meanwhile the debts of his uncle, the last Lord, so pricked his tender conscience that he was determined to work hard and pay them. Cousin Serena added that it was perfectly ridiculous for him to shut himself up as a parliamentary secretary all day for a few hundreds when he could be looking out for a rich wife. And she nodded at me. I replied with my usual defiance that all nice people seemed absurdly poor—at which she laughed more than ever and patted my cheek. Henceforth we heard a great deal of Lord Glame and met him constantly.

On June 14th we went down to Ascot Races and stayed with friends of Serena. Lady Gilian was also in the party, but Lord Glame at the last minute did not come that day. Gilian was very angry and would hardly appear at dinner, but Serena scolded her. For my part I was not angry but sorry. Lord Glame was the only man I had met who did not say more than he meant and who was never bored and never too tired to behave graciously.

Next morning we went again to the races. It was all very delightful at first, but I was a little lonely and the sun was so hot on my shoulders that after luncheon (when I found myself all alone) I nearly fainted, and I sat down helplessly on the nearest chair. At this minute I heard a most beautiful voice saying: "That young lady looks quite ill—do let us help her!"

I looked up, and there, in the front row of the great stand, was a little lady, with features that were as fine as they were delicate, and cheeks like fairy roses. She wore the colours of roses, too, in her pink satin gown and her bonnet with its three white plumes, and over her shoulders was a deep bertha of real lace, its long ends finished with pink rosettes. At the same moment she stooped over the edge of the stand and said, "Please take this," holding out a vinaigrette to me with a most royal smile.

There was a singing in my ears, and the figure of the dainty lady above was a rosy blur in a sea of whirling faces. Some one caught my arm, and I cannot express how thankful I was that it was young Lord Glame.

"It is the Queen," he whispered to me. "Can you curtsey?" Somehow I did, and the support of such a stalwart arm enabled me to control the faintness. As I rose to my full height again I was clear-headed enough to realise that I had been standing, without knowing, under Her Majesty's balcony in the great stand. She bent down to me and said something charming. I could not catch the words. As she stooped the second time one of her gloves fell at my feet.

By some terrible piece of awkwardness my skirt swept it back as I curtseyed again, and I trod on it, leaving a little green mark on it where my shoe had pressed it into the lawn.

"Oh! ma'am!" I stammered, "Your Majesty's glove—"

"Keep it," cried the Queen prettily. "You should have the vinaigrette too, if it were not that Lord Melbourne gave it me the other day, and I could not part with it." Then she nodded again I noticed standing beside her a tall handsome man, who bowed and smiled as she spoke.

Quite delirious with excitement, I let Serena take me away to a shady seat under the trees, where Lord Glame brought us some iced water. My cousin was perfectly charming for the rest of the afternoon.

"A bold beginning, little girl," she cried. "It was an inspiration to turn giddy at that moment. Nothing could have been cleverer. Everyone in the paddock and on the lawn is talking about you; you will be the chief *débutante* at the opera on the gala night, and your return to the enclosure will be a triumph."

Perhaps it was. I didn't care. I only had eyes for that pretty rounded figure in the rose dress. I watched her all day—our dear girl-Queen, our Lady of Midsummer, seated in her red velvet chair in the stand. I clutched the precious glove (pearl-grey, with silver stitching and

"HER MAJESTY STOOPED OVER THE EDGE OF THE STAND AND SAID, 'PLEASE TAKE THIS,' HOLDING OUT A VINAIGRETTE TO ME WITH A MOST ROYAL SMILE."—(*p.* 754.)

three scalloped flounces) in my hand, and in sheer excitement let it fall so often that Lord Glame insisted at last on my confiding it to his pocket.

As we came back over the lawn, with our escort carrying our shawls, Lady Gilian (who had ignored me all day) sailed up to us and almost put her arms round me. It certainly was a very amusing afternoon.

As Lord Glame went up to the royal stand to return the royal vinaigrette to one of the equerries, he was pounced upon by two tall, rather bony young women, who looked like parodies of him some six or seven years older.

Gilian murmured "Cats!" to Cousin Serena. I couldn't see any cats, but I remarked that they seemed to know our friend well. Gilian gave a groan.

"They're his sisters, the Hon. Agatha and the Hon. Honora Walton, and they are mill-stones about his neck. Dear Glame!"

I should have felt much more sorry for him but for Gilian's air of proprietorship, which appeared quite indelicate, for Cousin Serena had told

me (as a secret) that it was Gilian, and not Glame, who wanted to be "engaged."

I found myself being introduced to the two sisters, who soon took possession of me; they were more gaunt and more friendly than I expected. Their eyes glittered as they mentioned Gilian Marcett.

"Do *you* admire her?" they asked in one breath.

"I think she is beautiful," I said, and meant it.

"She thinks Glame cares for her," said Agatha, "but he doesn't. He doesn't care for anyone."

I said I admired independence in men. Honora looked at me a little oddly, I thought, and said, "He won't think of marrying anyone yet. He is much too young." She put her arm affectionately in mine to draw me out of the way of a rearing horse in the paddock.

"Is he?" I replied, "but a peer can marry money at any age, can't he? Old Lady Dewbery said so to Cousin Serena. She said that was just the danger. You never knew who would pounce down on an eligible young man of blue blood, and even poverty was better than a marriage beneath one."

The moment I said it I felt how indiscreet I had been. The eyes of the two girls were like grey gooseberries. Then they burst into laughter, as Cousin Serena so often did at my simple speeches.

"What do *you* think about . . . Glame?" asked Agatha.

"I don't *think*," I stammered, "I don't know Lord Glame well—but he is most charming, and he rides beautifully."

Then Honora talked for some time. She said how hard it was to have a title when you were so poor; it was so hard, of course, on the rest of the family, and that it would be very wrong if Glame married and turned his sisters out of house and home into the world by so doing. I sympathised with her; I said that I had been poor all my life.

Meanwhile Agatha stalked Gilian, who had somehow got Glame all to herself under the trees.

As we travelled by coach to London after the race week was over I told Serena all about our talks, for I came to know Lord Glame's sisters quite well and they were always delightful to me.

"Gilian is furious with you," was her answer, "because she thinks you are toadying up to her worst enemies for some purpose of your own."

The tears sprang to my eyes. "Oh!" I cried, "how can she ever dream of such a thing, and *why?*"

Cousin Serena put up her parasol in order that Captain Holly (who was in our party and sitting just behind us with Cousin George Armyne) should not see my distress.

"Dear little child," she said, "a girl who has no fortune and who is known to be on the hunt for a husband with a title says all sorts of venomous things when she is thwarted."

"If I were she," I murmured indignantly, "I would die rather than hunt Lord Glame. Lord Glame doesn't hunt for a fortune; he tries to pay debts he never made, and he never thinks about his title."

"But his sisters do. They use it for their own husband-hunting purposes. Their one determination is that unless he finds an heiress who can afford to keep up Florian Court for Glame, and the place in Yorkshire for them, they will stick to him like wax and scare away the most fascinating of possible brides."

"They were very nice to me though, when I told them how poor I was," I sighed, regretting that so much avarice should animate my new friends.

"That was excessively clever of you, little wretch!" laughed my cousin.

"I never knew it was clever to be truthful," I answered rather hopelessly. The world seemed very topsy-turvy.

But Cousin Serena only laughed again.

III.

It was the eve of the Great Ceremony. Cousin George Armyne was in great spirits at getting us all such splendid seats for the Abbey. He kept buying me pretty trinkets and flowers. The fact is he was a great society gossip (Government officials are always the worst), and he enjoyed hugely telling everyone at the clubs how the young Queen had given me her glove, while he vowed that in the great procession I was to precede the Duchess of Sutherland in order to hold *the* vinaigrette. Our little circle was most gay, and not a day passed without our meeting the Waltons and their brother, while Gilian spent most of her day with us because Lady Dewbery was too fat to do more than trundle out in her carriage. The only thing that worried me was the coldness of Gilian to me, and the curious embarrassment that Lord Glame always showed in her presence. Somehow or other it always ended in my being left to talk to him while Gilian talked to other gentlemen (Cousin Serena always had five or six about her of the smiling, make-believe-gay type), and the Walton girls generally managed to amuse themselves somehow. One night I dropped out of my outside pocket *the* glove. He asked in fun if it was a challenge. Some mischief

entered into me. I said, "Yes. A challenge to be happy."

He looked so shy that I was shy too.

"Am I very sour-faced?" he asked, so humbly and prettily.

"No, no," I stammered. "Only, something is grieving you."

He looked straight at me. "Something is worrying you," I persisted. "Please tell me. Somebody is trying to make you do something you do not want to do."

It was a bold hit, but true.

"You're a witch," he said, trying to laugh.

"It's true," I persisted.

"Quite true," he said.

"Well—don't," I said firmly. "I don't want to know what it is. I suppose it is all about money. These things always are, Cousin Serena says. How glad I am I have none! Please forgive my asking you such questions."

I was interrupted just then by a cry of delight from Honora, and we heard exclamations of "Do let us go." Serena explained that Cousin George thought it would be interesting to see the poor country folk who had all streamed into London and had encamped in Hyde Park.

"Nothing shall induce *me* to go," added Cousin Serena, "they will all be boiling onions for supper, and I never could abide onions, so you must chaperon the young ladies, George."

This we thought most delightful, for Cousin George, who was a great, big, good-natured Yorkshireman, could be most frisky, and we knew we could do anything we liked with him.

Over our evening dresses—we had already dined—we put on our long pelisses and drew the hoods over our faces, and each took the arm of a cavalier.

Gilian seemed to be busy with the ribands of her hood. She said, "Don't wait for me," lightly, and turned back towards the door, for she was looking for Glame, who had gone back for his cane. Cousin George suddenly interposed, "Of course I'll wait, Lady Gilian, and we will let these frivolous children go in front."

At the same time Glame came out, and to my utter surprise offered me his arm. I could not refuse, but I felt dreadfully shy, when, a few minutes earlier, I had been so bold. And I was miserable, too, because, though it was twilight, I could see that Gilian's eyes under her hood looked as if they could pierce me like red-hot arrows. Yet how could I be miserable long, on such a night, with such a cavalier?

It was all delicious! We walked demurely two-and-two through Bloomsbury and across Holborn to the Park. The stars came out and the little toy camp fires gleamed out—it was like one of our country fairs in Durham!

"This is how I should like to keep the Coronation," said my companion, pointing to a merry group of country folk, under the trees.

I twitted him for disloyalty. He flatly denied it.

"I detest mere pomp," he added.

"And I think it is beautiful when it *means* something," I cried. "My mother says the Coronation ceremony ought to be the most beautiful and holy thing in the world with such a Queen. Take off your hat, sir!"

He took it off and laughed heartily, and then we said, "God bless the Queen," very solemnly.

"I only wish I had a crown to wear," I said sighing; "Lady Dewbery's is a beauty, all red velvet and ever so many gold balls."

"Mine is no use to me," he replied. "It would look much nicer on anyone else," he added quickly.

A one-eyed pedlar with a tray of toys in front of him ran up to us, crying, "Strawberry leaves are down again, my lords and ladies! Down again, the strawberry leaves! Only sixpence for a dook's coronet complete, most noble marquis." And he offered us a whole row of the most entrancing toy crowns of all kinds.

"Oh, how adorable!" I cried.

"A keepsake for the Coronation!" bellowed another toy-seller as he elbowed the first one aside.

"Choose," said my companion. I chose at once a little gold metal Coronation chair, the one which now lies in my precious casket.

"Something else," he urged, but I knew he was poor and I refused.

"Then I shall choose for you," he said. It was so clever of him to guess that I should like one of those baby crowns. He chose one very carefully, and carried it for me till we got home. Once I was a little frightened, for we lost the others, but we decided to get into a hackney coach and drive home, and it gave us time for a most charming talk.

He turned to me suddenly and said, "Do you also laugh at me for trying to be frugal?"

"I never laugh at you," I replied; "I think you are quite right. Do you think I don't know what it is to feel like you—poor and always at a disadvantage? There is only one thing to remember, as my mother says, and that is that there is no capital worth having except Character."

"That is grand," he said, and I know his eyes glowed. "I should like you to say that to Agatha and Honora—and Lady Gilian," he added, as if in

spite of himself. That seemed to break the last layer of ice. He told me all about his ambition to make his tenants happy—how he wanted everyone to be glad and well, and no one to be sick or starving; how he hoped to work and prove by his brains that he was not a mere figurehead, a sleepy squire who let his family dignity slide, or a penniless rackster, who lived at other people's tables on the strength of a mere title. He told me, and I could hear how bitterly he felt it, that Florian Court—his house on the Thames—might have to be sold, as it was not in the entail like the other house.

"I want you to see it before it goes," he said. "Lady Armyne says she will bring you down there after the Coronation."

"Was it Florian Court that worried you to-night?" I asked.

"Yes. Honora and Agatha do not want me to sell it. But I must put honesty first. I must do the right thing."

"I know you always will," I said gently. I felt the tears in my eyes, and I was glad it was dark. The moment the hackney coach stopped I ran into the house, scarcely thanking Lord Glame for bringing me home. I went up to my room trembling with fear of Serena, for the clock was actually striking eleven. I threw the little Coronation toys hurriedly on the table and began to undress. Presently Serena in her French wrapper sailed in. She was laughing.

"Fie, you little monkey," she said; "George says he never saw you all the evening."

I collected myself, and spoke with great dignity. "Lord Glame was my escort, and I enjoyed myself very much," I added, copying Gilian's most languid air. "He bought me such charming keepsakes at the booths to-night." I waved my hand towards the toys.

"Dear me," said Cousin Serena, inspecting them, "do you know this is a baron's coronet, child?" She looked at me with her most quizzical expression. I simply could not face it. I blurted out, half laughing too (but nearer crying), "Oh, Serena, why are all nice people so horribly poor?"

She stroked my hair, went into peals of laughter, then became grave as a judge, and lifted me up from the floor.

"I should like to help poor Lord Glame," I said eagerly. "Why am I so poor?"

Then Serena explained herself in one sentence, that nearly stunned me.

"Anne, little Anne Lostrel, you are one of the biggest heiresses in Durham county, but your uncle wouldn't tell you for reasons which I can explain to you some other time." Then she sprang to her feet. "Good heavens, child! do you know it is nearly midnight, and we have to be in our seats in the Abbey fully dressed at nine o'clock to-morrow morning?"

I slept but little, but I did not seem to need sleep, for was I not rich, and could I not help my friend? I was aching for the moment when I could make the offer of my help, impatient of the minutes that delayed it.

IV.

Half London was awake all night. I am sure that the people encamped in Hyde Park never went to bed, and as for the upholsterers and carpenters, they were working all night in the larger streets by the light of torches. The stars must have been so amused at it all. The very birds woke earlier than usual it seemed!

I could hardly dress myself that morning in the preliminary stage. Serena's maid came to my rescue at last, and I felt like a thing of air when she had finished with me, so light and deft were her touches to my white silk powdered with roses, to my hat, white and pink and silver, and to my dark hair. Cousin Serena looked so pretty that I exclaimed for pleasure, and Cousin George, who was very nervous and fussy in his velvet Court garb (which as a Government official he had to wear), began to beam upon the world like a proud Bashi-Bazouk as we drove through the crowded streets.

Crush and crowd, cheer and counter-cheer, song and refrain, sun and dust, flowers and garlands, block and counter-block—these made up the history of our passage from Fitzroy Square to the great west door of the Abbey.

Inside it, what a sight! Many of the peeresses had already come, though it was scarcely after nine. People poured in. Lady Dewbery came in late, her crown looking like a great red plum above her round face; the old Duke of Denismore, his spindle shanks exactly like broom-sticks under his ruby mantle; and heaps of grandees I did not know, but to whom Serena nodded and waved continually. And still they came, and still the Abbey bells clashed overhead.

Somehow we had all waited so anxiously for the gun salute, which meant that the Queen was stepping into her carriage at Buckingham Palace, that when it came at last, just at ten o'clock, the vast waiting audience in the Abbey seemed to give a gigantic start. The very arches thrilled, and I held Serena's hand very tightly.

"Tantara, tantara!" we heard faintly at first, and then more vividly. They were the trumpeters

"ACROSS THAT DAZZLING, FLASHING CONCOURSE CAME HIS WORDS, THE WORDS OF THE OLD ANGLO-SAXON OATH OF ALLEGIANCE · 'I DO BECOME YOUR LIEGEMAN OF LIFE AND LIMB' -(*p.* 761.)

who announced the Queen. We had some time to wait still, but at last, at last, the Dean of Westminster appeared at the great door, and we knew the great ceremony had really begun.

Cousin Serena pointed out in succession all the grand people, the Lord Privy Seal, the Archbishops, the Lord Chancellor of England, and all the officials of the Household. Lord Byron, who carried the great Golden Spurs; and the great Dukes—Roxburghe with St. Edward's staff, Cleveland with the Sword of Mercy, Sutherland and Westminster with the other swords. Then came the Duchesses of Cambridge and Kent, both in purple velvet, with their coronets borne on velvet pillows by two viscounts. And so it went on till, in the wake of the array of officiating bishops, she trod, our Queen—no longer a Queen of mere summer, but of a great country and a loyal people. In crimson velvet, lined and furred with ermine and bordered with golden lace, she paced slowly, nay meekly, up the aisle, her slender neck almost overweighted with the chains and collars necessitated by her state. The simple circlet of gold on her head made her look younger than ever by contrast with her rich mantle and the kingly fur. How I envied the eight maidens who carried her train! Royal by right of their high parentage, graceful and dignified in view of the supreme dignity conferred upon them, they were like attendant queens upon the Queen-in-Chief. I was proud to be their countrywoman.

Deafening was the applause as the Queen took her seat in the chancel in the Recognition Chair. Then for some moments, while the slight figure knelt in prayer at the altar, there descended upon that vast concourse a holy hush. It was a superb moment of lull and quietness before the first public acclamation. Forty of the Westminster scholars (who, since the days of Queen Elizabeth, personate at coronations the nation) rose in their seats and shouted "Vivat Regina!" It seems absurd to think that a handful of school lads have such a right, but so it is. I think their boyish shouts gave the Queen courage, for she looked brightly up at them.

The ceremony proceeded; the presentation of the Queen—north, east, south and west—to the people in the Abbey, the drums, the fanfare of brass, and lastly the National Anthem, quite overpowering in its effect. Then she really broke down a little I think, for I was watching her through my glasses.

The next part of the ceremony was very interesting and quaint, and it was particularly pretty to see Her Majesty offer her gold ingot at the altar. To all the tremendous questions put to her by the Archbishop she answered in a sweet voice, low but never tremulous. The anointing over (she was anointed on her forehead and the palms of her hands) the spurs and other symbols of sovereignty were laid on the altar, and I noticed that the gentleman who carried the Sword of State for the rest of the time was Lord Melbourne.

All sorts of thrilling episodes come back to me as I look back years after, but I remember best of all the little wistful expression in the Queen's face when Lord John Thynne told her she must carry the great Orb of State in her small hand.

"It is very heavy," she said simply; but she took it bravely.

The putting on of the Coronation ring took quite a minute and puzzled everybody, and no one knew till next day that the jeweller had made it for the wrong finger, so that His Grace of York had literally to force it on!

At last it was time for the final act. The Duke of Norfolk presented his traditional glove for the Queen's right hand, and stood by her to support one of her sceptres. For a moment she sat so, holding the Sceptre of Sovereignty and the Rod of Mercy, one in each hand. For that tremulous, tremendous moment the Archbishop offered the Crown of England at the High Altar. Slowly he arose, breathlessly we waited, not a veil rustled, not a sword clanked. Calmly and majestically the Primate lifted the Crown and placed it on the young sweet head!

If the cannon had thrilled us before it shook us now. The whole concourse seemed to vibrate anew. Brass drums covered the din of excited voices, the rustle of the veils of princesses and peeresses, who struggled to don their crowns and coronets gracefully, while princes and peers put on theirs with true masculine deliberation, and the orchestra, under Sir George Smart, flooded the Abbey with rich and heavenly sounds.

Then, so soon as our Queen was finally enthroned, began the homage of princes and lords. We were fortunately so placed as to witness the approach and bearing of all these. How our hearts thrilled as the old Duke of Sussex, who tottered as he climbed to his sovereign niece, was met by her impulsively and with open arms! How we gasped both with horror and amusement as poor old Lord Rolle tripped and rolled down the crimson flight, and how we longed to clap as he made another gallant attempt, but in vain, to reach the throne. If Uncle Anthony had been there he never could have resisted the pun on the old lord's name over which so many of the foreign journals made merry afterwards! All this I remember well—but there is one greater, sweeter memory for me,

the moment when Glame, my friend, came up towards the end of the continuous procession to take his oath of fealty. He trod the steps like a prince. I saw him sink on one knee. I held my breath and listened for his voice. Across that dazzling, flashing concourse came his words, the words of the old Anglo-Saxon oath of allegiance which the men of England have spoken since the days of the Confessor :—

" I do become your liegeman of life and limb and of earthly faith and worship; and Faith and Truth I will bear unto you to live and die, against all manner of folks. So help me God!"

I saw him touch the cross on the crown of the dear Queen who looked herself still such a child. For a moment I felt that it was all a delicious babies' game, a grand piece of nursery pomp, a rather solemn kind of charade in purple velvet with real velvet and real ermine, not the make-believe fancy dresses I used to wear when I played at being a queen in fairy plays with other children. But again, as I looked, the old awe overwhelmed me, as I knew it overwhelmed Glame. His cheek flushed and I saw his head almost drooping—the young peer so rich in grace and goodness, so poor in things material, so fair an English gentleman. And I caught my breath again and choked back the bitter, sweet tears!

V.

"The fairy tale is over," I said to myself as I woke the day after, the 29th of June. My evening dress was lying where I had thrown it the night before, when we had come home dazed, weary, overexcited, bursting with loyalty, after the brilliant ball at Apsley House, which followed the Coronation. I had shaken hands with the Iron Duke, I had danced three times with Lord Glame. He had left early, and I could not find courage to say what I wanted to say. And yet it seemed so simple to put it so : " I am rich. One day I shall be able to help you to realise all your ideals, your dreams!"

I woke with a terrible headache, feeling that the magic had faded from life. It was very hard to begin the day. Ever since then I have observed that the most important days in your life always open in the most ordinary unideal fashion and under depressed conditions.

Cousin Serena sent my breakfast to my room as usual and a little message.

"Put on your blue gauze. We are driving down to Florian Court. Glame has arranged a little fête."

"A new chapter of the fairy tale has begun," I cried.

* * * *

I pass over the details of that lovely summer day, the pretty *al fresco* luncheon at Florian Court near Richmond ("my last banquet to my friends before the dear old place goes into the market," Glame whispered to me), the stateliness of the old Elizabethan riverside house with its yew gardens and old-fashioned flowers, the delicate simplicity and light-heartedness of the whole entertainment. Everyone was happy, Agatha and Honora played the hostesses more graciously then I could have imagined, and, to my surprise and relief, Lady Gilian was not there; so everyone was friendly. We were about to send for our carriage when Lord Glame asked me to come and see his favourite part of the grounds, a bit of tangled wood real wood—which he had refused to allow the gardener to cultivate. "This was my garden as a child," he said; "I wanted you to see it because you would understand how I hate leaving the place and selling it to someone who doesn't care."

"But *I* care," I said, my eyes brimming over, for now I felt I could say what I wanted to say; "and I am going to buy Florian Court and give it to you."

"Anne!" he said. I don't know how I looked, but *his* face was crimson.

"I am rich," I said; "Cousin Serena says so. I want to help you, Lord Glame, please let me! And Honora and Agatha will be quite happy, and you can work and carry out your ideas, and whenever you want money for your tenants and your schools I will give it to you. Please, please——"

I stopped short with a chill at my heart, for he had turned away and I knew he must be terribly angry with me. I whisked round and walked away very quickly, trying to find the path back to the gardens. For twenty seconds I could not believe he was really going to forgive me. And then my heart almost stood still, for he came after me and simply put both his arms round me. What happened? We quarrelled a great deal, and I won the victory. What did I say? I don't know; can scarcely write; but only laugh now for sheer happiness in looking back.

All I know now is that I found myself sitting on a bank of moss in this tangled childish "garden," while Glame kissed, not my hand only, but also my lips as he whispered:

"Dear—I do become your liegeman of life and limb."

"Crown me, too!" I said, half in jest. So he kissed my head, and then I kissed the little toy coronet which he had given me and which I carried always in the little silk bag I wore

Cousin Serena said we were ridiculous when we told her, but I was accustomed to her pretty

ridicule, and besides I had kept the carriage waiting for three-quarters of an hour!

* * * *

We waited for each other two years, my betrothed and I, for Uncle Anthony said I was too young and must learn to be a woman of the world first and help my future husband in his public career. Glame won golden opinions in official circles, and again and again while I waited at Hornstone for him I read out scraps of his letters to my mother. Uncle Anthony never ventured to make his old joke again. He found a new one over which to stutter.

"D-dear me, Maria!" he said, one day when we saw in the papers that Lord Melbourne at a big dinner had spoken of Glame's brilliant support of the Government and his idealistic view of politics—"D-dear me! Glame actually rhymes to f-fame."

"And hame," said my mother, when I, as a happy bride, welcomed her for the first time to Florian Court.

"THE GIRL'S REALM" NEEDLEWORK DESIGNS.

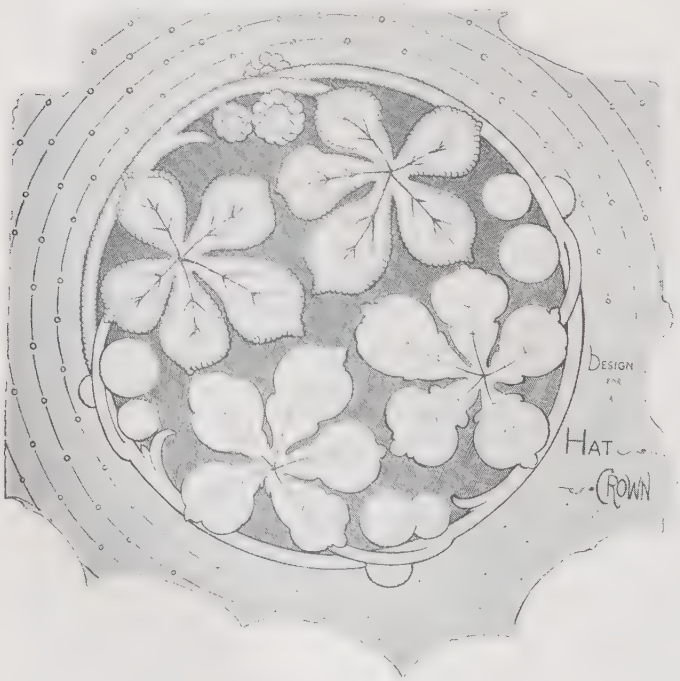
IV.—AN APPLIQUÉ HAT-CROWN.

EMBROIDERY, both in its simpler forms as well as in its many and varied forms of appliqué, and encrustation, is used with such excellent effect nowadays on every style of dress, that it is not surprising that it is being applied to the adornment of the most fashionable headgear as well.

The design shown in the accompanying sketch is intended to be used as an appliqué crown to a hat.

The motives employed in it are the leaves of the Horse Chestnut. This is most adaptable, and a good result ought to be easily obtainable with it.

Traced and carefully cut out of green satin shading to brown, the leaves should be veined and touched-up with embroidery, and applied under the net or tulle used to veil them, and carefully outlined with spangles of a brownish gold, the whole being placed over the satin crown, also of a brown gold. An excellent colour scheme will be the result.



The same treatment of this pattern might be rendered in black and white only; a very useful combination. The foundation should be made of white satin with the embroidery in black, worked in the same way.

The full size of the design is about six inches in diameter, and can be obtained from Mr. Ainsworth on paper, from which the leaves can very easily be cut, or if there is any difficulty he will trace them on the satin direct. His address is 4, Campden House Terrace, Kensington, W.

Other designs that have appeared in this series are: I. EMBROIDERED BLOUSE AND VEST (April), II. NIGHT-DRESS SACHET AND GLOVE CASE (May), III. EMBROIDERED COLLAR (June).

NOTE.—*Our readers are invited to suggest suitable subjects for this Needlework Page for explanation and illustration by our Artist, and questions on embroidery will be answered by an expert. If our girls care to take advantage of this advice, we think they will find it of great value.*

CROQUET GOLF.

STARTING OFF FROM THE STICK.

A New Game that will prove popular with Girls this Summer.

By GLADYS BEATTIE CROZIER.

With Photographs by the Author.

Visiting a country house in Berkshire where "Croquet Golf"—a game only originated, I believe, last summer—had been all the rage, I arrived, together with two other guests, just too late to play in the tournament which was then taking place.

I remember that on our arrival no flannel-clad figures rose as usual to greet us from the porch, nor was there the vestige of a tennis net to be seen in the garden, which had been given over — as the condition of the grass and the colour of the once beautiful new croquet balls showed—to devotees of "Croquet Golf."

We were, of course, at once badly bitten by the mania which always attends on the inauguration of a new game, and as our hosts steadily refused to organise another tournament for our benefit, we decided to follow the example of the man who, after he had been blackballed by all the smart yachting clubs, appeared one day sporting a flag that bore the legend "M.O.B.Y.C." (My own blooming Yacht Club). We decided to organise a tournament on our own account.

It seemed a pity that so deservedly popular a game should not be more widely known, so I took a series of snapshots, illustrating as far as possible the more important strokes, and borrowed a list of the rules which had been drawn up for the tournament. They are as follow:—

"GOING INTO POSITION FOR THE HOOP."

"ATTEMPTING A STEEPLECHASE—."

RULES FOR CROQUET GOLF.

1. The ground shall be laid out as for croquet, except that the two centre hoops shall be placed so as to be played at right angles to, instead of in the alignment of, the sticks.

2. The players shall draw lots for choice of balls, blue and black belonging to one player, and red and yellow to the other.

3. The order of playing shall be as in croquet, viz.:—blue, red, black, yellow. The game shall commence from one stick not more than one mallet's length distant from it.

4. The object of the game is for a player to "make" the larger number of hoops and sticks in a round; a hoop or stick is "made" when one of the player's balls goes through the former, or hits the latter, in proper order.

5. No player may play a ball on towards the next hoop or stick intentionally, until the one which is being played for has been "made."

6. If a player in the act of striking his ball hits or touches any other ball first, it shall be counted as a "foul," and his opponent shall have the option of replacing the balls moved, or not. A hoop or stick cannot be "made" off a "foul."

7. No player shall strike his ball until his opponent's ball has come to rest.

8. If a player plays his opponent's ball by mistake, it shall be left to the option of the opponent whether such a ball be brought back, or whether the opponent shall play the player's ball instead.

In reading Rule No. 4, it will be seen what an important stroke "steeplechasing" is, and the illustrations here, showing exactly how it is done, make a written description unnecessary.

Stymieing one's opponent's ball is another useful stroke. The player being unable to go through the hoop himself, plays so as to leave

STEEPLECHASING—"THE EFFORT IS CROWNED WITH SUCCESS."

"A SPORTING SHOT FOR THE STICK."

his ball between his opponent's ball and the hoop, thus spoiling his opponent's next stroke.

Here again "steeplechasing" comes in very useful, as it is possible by a clever stroke to jump over one's opponent's ball when stymied by him, and to place one's self directly in front of the hoop ready for the next stroke.

The scoring is managed as in golf.

A player making the first hoop is said to be "one up," if he also makes the second hoop he is said to be "two up," whilst if his opponent makes it the game is "all down," and so on.

There are fourteen points to be made in a round, so that it is possible for two equally matched players to come out at the end of the game "all down," in which case another half round—seven points—may be played in order to decide the winner.

When a player in the midst of a game is already as many points up as there are more points to win, so that his opponent may still tie, but cannot win, the game is said to be "dowmey three" or "dowmey four," etc., as the case may be.

Croquet Golf can be played equally well by four people choosing partners or each playing for himself, but we thought it hardly made so good a game as when played by two people each taking two balls.

THE CORRECT POSITION.

It is usual in a tournament for each two players to play three rounds, and an umpire on these occasions is a *sine quâ non*.

Croquet Golf is a game peculiarly suited for girls, from the fact that a round may be played in about twenty minutes, thus avoiding the hours of standing about which a game of ordinary croquet usually involves.

Another advantage—Croquet Golf is a game in which a person with no previous knowledge of regular croquet can become fairly proficient in the course of a few games. For instance, "steeplechasing," which is the most difficult stroke, was acquired by the present writer after half-an-hour's practice. Pleasant little tournaments of six or eight players can be finished in an afternoon, and in informal play of this description it is only necessary for each two players to play one round, or one round and a-half, in order to decide the game, instead of the more usual three rounds.

A BAD ATTITUDE: HOW NOT TO PLAY.

By NELLIE DAVIS.

It is to be noticed that our greatest poets possessed an intense love for flowers, and found in the common incidents of the natural year a wonderful pleasure.

In "Twelfth Night" there is a graceful allusion to violets "stealing and giving odour," which shows how well Shakespeare had understood "the secret that doth make a flower a flower, so forms it that to bloom is to be sweet, and to receive to give."

"Pale primroses that die unmarried ere they can behold bright Phœbus in her strength," are supposed to flourish best in shade, unwooed by rays of sun. We love our greatest poet all the better for his delight in wayside flowers.

Even the despised marigold, Shakespeare appreciated: "The sleeping marigold that goes to bed with the sun, and with him rises weeping."

How delightful too, is the battle of flowers between Perdita and Polixenes. The simple shepherdess is as fresh as the flowers that she shares with old and young alike. An air of breezy sunshine surrounds her, for those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it out of their own lives. Her thoughts fly to the time of year when "daffodils take the winds of March with beauty."

Herrick's charming little poem must always be associated with daffodils; Wordsworth, too, sang of their beauty, and Milton rejoiced in their golden tints, and tells us in Lycidas, that "daffodillies fill their cups with tears."

We have the gentle pansies for "thoughts," and the wild flowers, which we so sadly associate with poor wild Ophelia.

Chaucer and Spenser had a warm affection for "the little daisy that at evening closes." Beaumont and Fletcher chanted the praises of the Queen of flowers, "Roses—not royal in their smells alone but in their hue." Keats, with his musical voice, sang of "Fast fading violets covered up with leaves," and the dainty airiness of "Sweet peas, on tiptoe for a flight, with wings of gentle flush, o'er delicate white." Longfellow's lilacs, "Tossing in the winds of May;" and Tennyson's "Forget-me-nots, that grow for happy lovers." Perhaps Leigh Hunt's description of poppies is less familiar.

"A beautiful bed of poppies glowed in the setting sun, like dreams of Titians. It looked like a bed for Proserpina—a glow of melancholy beauty, containing a joy perhaps beyond joy. Poppies with their dark ruby cups and crowned heads, the more than wine colour of their sleepy silk, and the funereal look of their antlers, seem to have a meaning in them beyond other flowers. They look as if they held a mystery in their hearts, like sleeping kings of Lethe."

Tennyson accurately describes the sunflower, which "Rays round with flame her disc of seed"; and very homely are his lines—

> "How sweetly smells the honeysuckle in the hushed night,
> As if the world were one of utter peace, and love, and joy, and gentleness."

In Matthew Arnold's "Thyrsis" there is a passage which recalls his home, which he once spoke of as "the only '*riant*' part of England."

> "Soon we shall have gold-dusted snapdragon,
> Sweet William, with his homely cottage smell,
> And stocks in fragrance blow."

Browning, in his earliest poems, appeared to have "a joy in the world's loveliness," which, it has been truly said, is absent in his latest work, when he used Nature as a background only.

In "Pauline" occur the lines: "The blackthorn boughs, so dark in bare wood, when glistening in the sunshine, were white with coming buds"; and in "Paracelsus" there is a beautiful description of Spring, when "God renews His ancient rapture."

Ruskin asserts that "not enjoying the beauty of things, goes far deeper than mere blindness. It is a form of antagonism, and is essentially Satanic." In "Modern Painters" he gives an example of three kinds of perception, and ranks as the highest "The man who perceives rightly in spite of his feelings, and to whom the primrose is for ever nothing than itself—a little flower apprehended in the very plain and leafy part of it, whatsoever and how many so ever the passions may be that exist round it."

Flowers scatter their fragrance over our lives, teaching us the best of all lessons, that it is a right insight, when through the eye we are led to regard the beauties of Nature, and to feel that in all visible beauty is foreshadowed something more beautiful still.

> "Were I, O God, in churchless lands remaining,
> Far from all voice of teachers and divines,
> My soul would find in flowers of Thy ordaining,
> Priests! Sermons! Shrines!"

ON CROCHETED DOILIES.

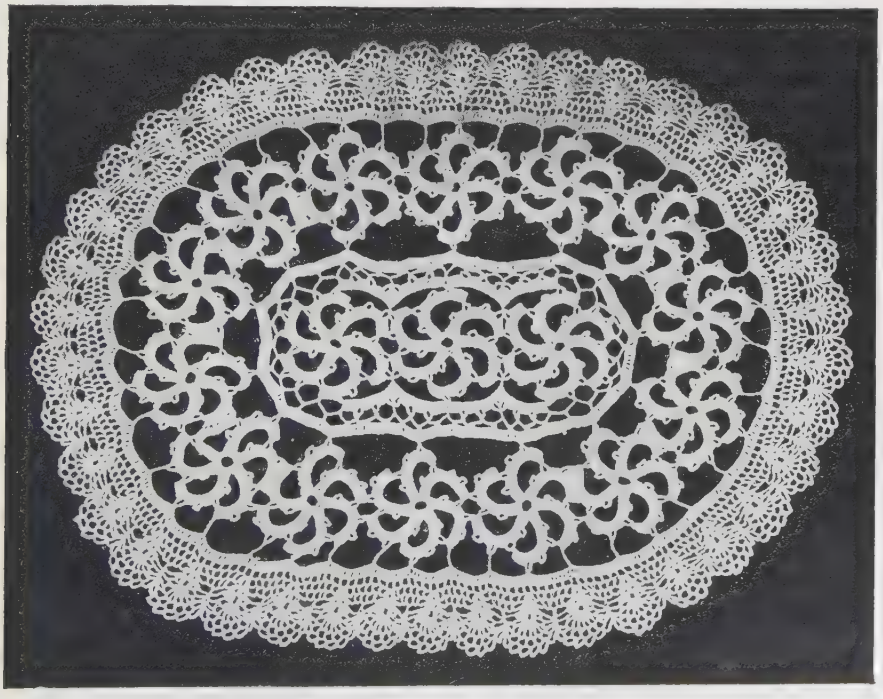
Some Beautiful Old Designs Revived.

THE revival of crocheted lace-work has brought into vogue again the old-fashioned table mats of crocheted linen thread. Many beautiful old samples of these are found among the treasures of table linen stored away in cedar chests and high old mahogany bureaus. Again these are seeing the light, and their exquisite patterns are being copied. The old, when it is good, is sure to become the new if one waits long enough, and crocheted doilies are having their day.

Linen thread in pure white or cream, or even in the unbleached écru shade, may be used. The number of the thread must depend on the make, in which the grades vary. It must be fine, and the steel needle too.

For the first design, that of the scroll pattern, make the scrolls, crochet a chain of 12 stitches, join. 2d row—18 s. c. To form the arms, make a ch. of 14 sts.; crochet on that ch. 22 s c., join to the centre, reverse and crochet 22 s. c., turn, 5 s. c., 5 ch., 4 s. c., 5 ch., 4 s. c., 5 ch., 4 s. c., 5 ch., 5 s. c., join to centre. The five other arms are made the same way, only join the ch. of 14 sts. to second loop of preceding arm. The centre of the mat is formed of 3 scrolls; the sides of the scrolls are filled in with a figure like the arms, only less curved, then a row of meshes of 9 ch. to each mesh, and a row of ch. st., which straighten the edge for a row of d. c. Fourteen scrolls joined by last loop of each scroll to d. c. A row of ch. st., 13 in each division, joined in s c and t. s. to loops and ends of arms.

Border.—After crocheting in d. c. a row all round, next make a row of meshes in d. c. and 2 ch. 2d row—6 d. c. meshes, 2 ch., 1 d. c. shell, 1 ch. between. 3d. row—5 d. c. meshes, 2 ch., 2 d. c., 1 ch., 2 d. c., 1 ch., 2 d. c., 1 ch. 4th row—1 double shell in 1 ch. st., 3 ch., another double shell, 5 ch., 1 d. c. in centre mesh. 5th row—6 d. c. in 3 ch., 2 ch., 1 d. c. in shell, 3 ch., 1 s. c. 6th row—8 d. c.



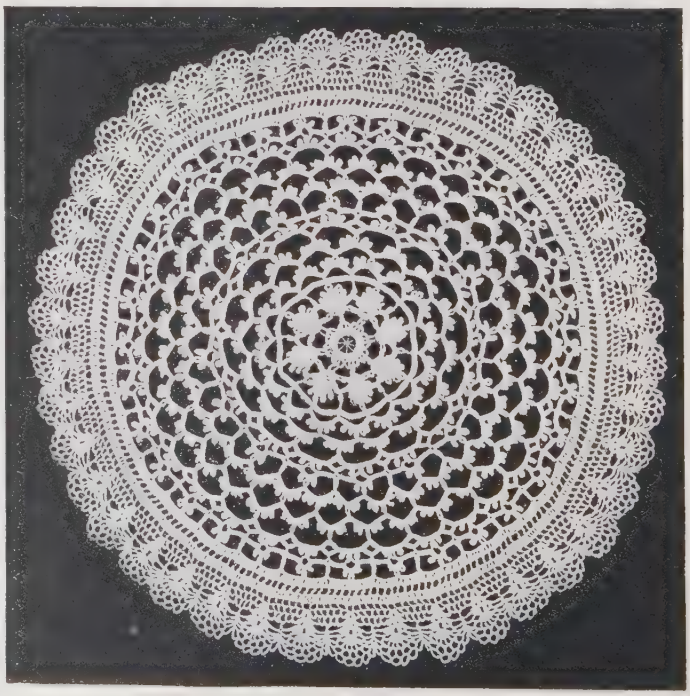
SCROLL-DESIGN CROCHETED DOILY.

ROSE AND CLOVER DESIGN.

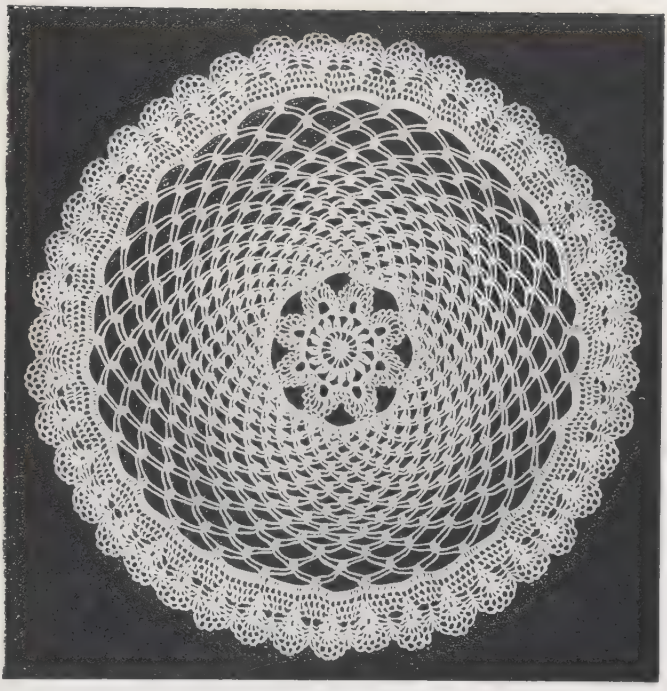
meshes, 2 ch.; join last mesh in s. c. 7th row.—7 d. c. meshes, 3 ch.; join last mesh s. c. 8th row.—6 meshes, 5 ch.; join in s. c. in every mesh.

For the rose and clover-leaf doily, make 4 medallions and a centrepiece. The medallions are commenced in the centre with a chain of 10 sts.; 2nd row has 12 meshes in triple crochet; 3d row, a scallop of 6 d. c. in each mesh; 4th row, a ch. of 4 sts. joined back of each scallop; 5th row, a scallop of 8 sts. in d. c. in each chain; 6th row, a chain of 5 sts. fastened back in each scallop; 7th row—after making 5 sts. in the last row of scallops, which forms the petals to the rose, make 5 ch. sts.; join back with first ch.; another ch. of 5 sts.; join with first st. in ch., thus forming two small picots; then a ch. of 18 sts.; join to 15th st. in ch.; into that mesh crochet 18 s. crochet sts. Form a ch. of 9 sts.; join to 6th st.; make 3 meshes of 5 ch. each into the single mesh. Into each of these 3 meshes crochet a scallop of 9 d. c., shaping the clover leaf. Next a ch. of 7 sts.; join to first picot. Make 2 picots of 5 ch. each; join to 5th st. of the 5 triple c. Make 5 tr. c. This completes one of the twelve figures which form medallion. Repeat 11 times. 8th row.—ch. of 9 sts. joined to centre of each scallop; 2 ch., joined in tr. c. to centre of oblong mesh. 9th row—ch. of 5 sts. forms outer picots, crocheted in d. c., making 9 meshes, fastened in ch. rows, forming the outside edge.

To make the bread-plate doily, commence by wrapping the thread around the left forefinger 25 times, crochet tightly over the strands which form a cord 40 s. c., allowing 5 sts. in between loops of 5 ch. each. To form the leaves, begin in centre



A LARGE BREAD-PLATE DOILY.



A FISH-NET-STITCH DOILY.

of loop, and crochet 13 ch.; turn 2 d. c. 5 t. c. and 2 d. c. in ch., leaving 3 ch.; crochet around leaf 2 s. c. and picots of 5 ch. until 9 picots are made; 3 ch.; join in s. c. to loop, 3 ch.; join to 3d s. c. in the space of 5 s. c. in cord. Repeat 7 times, until 8 leaves are made, joining them together by 1st and 2d picots; this is done in the first by making 2 ch.; draw picot through by thread on needle; 2d joining make 5 ch.; join to 2d picot 3 s. c., 5 ch., 3 s. c., 3 ch. This forms leaf centre. 1st row—fasten thread in top centre picot to leaf, make 9 ch., connect by d. c. to the single picot in the connecting-link between leaves; 9 ch. s. c. in next top picot; so on around. 2d row—1 s. c. in every ch. st. 3d row is formed by 16 meshes, 11 ch. to each one. 4th row—4 s. c., 5 ch., 1 s. c., 5 ch., 1 s. c., 5 ch., 1 s. c., 5 ch., 1 s. c., 5 ch., 4 s. c. 5th row—16 meshes, 13 ch. in each. 6th row—5 s. c., 5 ch.; the other portion like 4th row. 7th row—16 meshes, 15 ch. in each mesh. 8th row—5 s. c., 5 ch., 2 s. c., 5 ch., 2 s. c., 5 ch, 2 s. c., 5 ch., 2 s. c., 5 ch., 5 s. c. 9th row—join first and last picot, crochet 5 ch. d. c. in centre picot, 7 ch. d. c. in centre picot, 5 ch.; join to last and first picot; 5 ch. forms loop, or picot, in this row. 10th row—like 3d, only the number of meshes is doubled, making 32. 11th row—like 4th. 12th row—like 5th. 13th row—like 6th. 14th row—like 7th. 15th row—like 8th.

The fish-net doily is made by using a fancy medallion for the centre, and filling in with a pretty lace stitch. 1st row—make a chain of 4 sts. 2d, 3d, and 4th rows—of single crochet. 5th row—16 meshes of triple c., with 3 ch. in each mesh. 6th row—3 s. c. in each mesh. 7th row—3 tr. sts., one in each s. c., keeping this last st. of the first two on needle until all are made; draw thread through all at once, forming the three in one point; 5 ch. Repeat 15 times. 8th row—7 s. c. in each chain. 9th row—in centre of s. c. mesh, crochet chain of 11 sts.; join back to centre of s. c. mesh; fill ch. of 11 sts. with 11 s. c.; then 11 meshes of 3 ch. each in d. c. and t. c.; outside, 11 meshes with 5 ch. each; join to top of next point. Repeat 7 times. This forms the scalloped centre. 10th row—13 ch.; join to 5th mesh, 2 ch.; join to centre mesh, 2 ch.; join to next mesh. Repeat 7 times. 11th row—fill chain with a row of d. c. 12th row—3 d. c., 3 ch. Skip one st., and join with s. c. 13th row—3 s. c. in d. c., 7 ch.

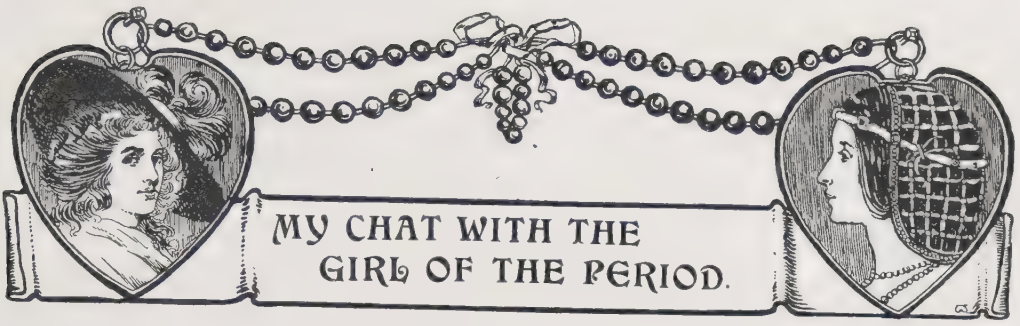
THE GIRL'S REALM PUZZLE PAGE.

RESULT OF THE PUZZLE COMPETITION FOR MAY.

The May Competition reached a high standard of excellence. That the puzzles were not difficult is shown by the fact that no fewer than eight competitors succeeded in answering the whole of them correctly, notwithstanding the two or three misprints that unfortunately occurred in them. Two competitors, ADA STARLING and L. G. ROBSON, are former First Prize winners, within the time limit, and are, therefore, ineligible to take prizes this month, though they both secured the full number of marks (120). Six other competitors gained the maximum number, and among these the total value of the three prizes will be divided. They are CELIA COOPER (19), The Cottage, Hatton Park, Wellingborough; MARGERY L. ROBINSON (19), Claremont House, Shrewsbury; LOUISETTE BLYTH (15), Grafton House, Sunderland Road, Forest Hill, London; ELINOR B. STAFFORD SACKVILLE (14), Sprivers, Horsmonden, Kent; GERTRUDE DEARNLEY (17), Broad Bent, Honley, near Huddersfield; and GLADYS JOSLIN (16), c/o R. G. Callaby, Esq., Tabor House, Hunstanton. Prizes value 3s. 9d. will be sent to each of these. The following deserve Honourable Mention: Blanche O. Leest and Gynnydd Scott, 118 marks each; May McWilliam and Joyce Heathcote, 117 marks each; Ethel Warren, Margaret Wilson, M. Stephana Walters, Elsie M. Scudder, Mildred Heathcote, Ariadne Dunderdale and Esther Bell, all 115 marks. No competitor was in any way prejudiced by the misprints. As the First Prize has to be divided, the winning of a share will not place the winner on the "Roll of Honour," or prejudice her in carrying off a First Prize. The correct answers to the puzzles will be found on p. xi.

THE HAUNTED VILLAGE.

THERE is more in this charming picture than at first meets the eye. The place it represents is in fact haunted by innumerable faces, which, if you are clever enough, you will be able to find. We offer six excellent Fountain Pens to the six girls who succeed in finding the greatest number of these faces. Competitors who do not want to cut their magazine should get a piece of tracing-paper and fix it over the picture, outlining on it each face as they find it. Where tracing-paper is not used the faces should be marked in red ink; and the page or the tracing-paper should be sent to the Editor, THE GIRL'S REALM, Norfolk House, Norfolk Street, London, W.C., on or before July 20th, 1902.



By ALICE CORKRAN.

My Dear Girls,—The Coronation is upon us, and I am sure your hearts will be stirred, as you read of it. There will defile before you representatives of the various colonies that acknowledge the sway of England—Canada, Australia, India, Africa (of whom we are reminded in our frontispiece), New Zealand, all sending some of their citizens to swell the pageant of the monarch's accession. We realise that our England, a mere dot on the map of the world, is a mighty motive ruling the destinies of millions of human beings. It is good to belong to her world-wide Empire, and, as far as may be, to help to make that Empire a benignant rule to all who acknowledge its sway. We feel that we are on the starting-point of a new time. We are always looking about for these starting points, always glad to believe that the good time is coming. All our interest in its mere pomp and circumstance is still in the main to be traced to the higher interest it has as the beginning of a new epoch. The late Queen's coronation had that interest in a pre-eminent degree. George IV. and William IV. had passed away, and the nation longed for something to break the tradition of the coarse manners of their time. This something came in the young girl-Queen, pure, because of her youth and her girlhood. The whole nation's hopes were fixed on her, and we know that they were not disappointed. Now we cannot help asking, What is the new thing that is to come with this new reign? It cannot certainly be anything better than what the girl-Queen gave us. We are never likely to have in our day any transformation so wonderful as that. Still, the new time will no doubt be a time of new ideas.

I imagine that in the new time there will be the change from a certain formality of manners to greater simplicity. The change began before the end of the last reign, and then it took a form that was not always edifying. All sense of ceremony was lost. Bluntness, not to say rudeness, was mistaken for sincerity, and want of ordinary politeness for good form. Some of you, "Muriel," "Phyllis," and "Betty," and some others, have written to me on the subject of manners. I have been naturally led to think about them, and the other day a little incident occurred that crystallised my thoughts. I was leaving an A.B.C. shop, when a man in front of me settled his score. He laid down his ticket and a two-shilling piece without a word; the girl at the counter returned his change without a word; he also took up his change without a word, went out through the swinging doors, and there was an end of the transaction. Then it chanced that after leaving the shop I went on to buy some stamps in an office "run" by lady-clerks. Here much the same thing happened all over again. Customers came in and asked for stamps without the use of the old time-honoured formula, "If you please." The girls served them, naturally, without intruding a "Thank you" into the transaction. It was a cold, bloodless operation, in which from first to last the two parties made the other to understand that their principles were those of the Miller of the Dee—

> "I care for nobody, no, not I,
> And nobody cares for me."

It was about as interesting as an encounter of two oysters on Whitby beach. Well, after leaving the post-office, I entered an omnibus, and there—Oh! wonder, the vanished formula put in a sort of shame-faced appearance at last. In taking my money and handing me my ticket the conductor actually said "Thank you," as though the sound were produced by some other variety of the punching machine concealed within his organism. Still, it was something, and I went home comforted at last, for I am old-fashioned enough to regret, as some of you girls do, the use of these terms of politeness that do so much to soften the natural asperities of human intercourse. In the long passage upwards from the primitive acideon we have been slowly gaining in politeness as we have lost in tail. As the tail is the mark of the beast, politeness is that of the civilised man. In Mr. Punch's suggestive pictures of the pre-historic age, it will be remembered that the ordinary mode of salutation is the heaving of a lump of rock at the head of your neighbour. The practice has survived to our day, though happily only in certain circles, as, for instance, in the "heave half a brick at him" of the amenities of introduction in the mining districts. But it is sad to see anything approaching it—and sheer, blunt indifference does approach it—surviving in the ordinary manner of our own time. Surviving, indeed, is not the word I want. The real point is that our want of manner in public is a mere reversion to the old bad type of the past. Our forefathers, by all accessible accounts of them, were

much better behaved. We have lost the old flowery forms, and now we never waste "Thank you" on a fellow-creature who is not of our own immediate circle. A tradesman does, but he knows it will be charged in the bill. I wonder what will bring us back to the old sweetness of manner. Why should not the customer in the tea shop, or the customer in the post-office, say "Please" when he gives his order, and the other spare a "Thank you" when he has paid his bill. It makes life run so much more easily.

This melancholy want of form should be checked when it appears, as it will infect all our manners. If we learn to be formless in our intercourse in public, we shall finally carry the same utilitarian principle into our family life, and we shall be lucky if, in the long run, we are able to ask a neighbour to pass the salt without pointing a revolver at his head like the backwoodsman of anecdote.

However, most changes come in that way. People begin by taking the opposite extreme and finally settle in a sort of middle point which equally satisfies aspiration and common sense. So I am inclined to think that, while all our social forms will be simplified they will be regulated by a more humane spirit, by the wish neither to wound or hurt. We are going to leave off counting visits; introductions will not be so rigorously exacted before we are permitted to exchange a word with a fellow-creature The new manners, in short, will probably be a "go as you please," tempered only by good sense and decorum. Remember that the go-as-you-please idea is very prevalent in the higher thought of the time. It colours all the higher philosophy, political and social. Perhaps some of you have heard of the German philosopher, Nietzsche. He is for ever pleading for the development of the individual, by making him independent of the dictation of the mass; and this, and other speculations of that sort are colouring all our legislation. Well, I think that this demand for greater personal freedom will certainly find its way into our manners and our private life. Sometimes for evil, undoubtedly, but also sometimes for good.

I have been led to think so after reading a letter from "TWO FORLORN MAIDS," which is now lying on my desk:—

"My sister and I are in rather a predicament.

"When out in the evenings we are constantly meeting two girls about our ages (19 and 16), evidently sisters, judging from their looks. We are very interested in them, and would like to make friends, for we have reason to believe that they, too, are interested in us, and once or twice we have smiled at each other.

"We are never likely to be introduced, as none of our friends know them, so can you suggest some means by which we may become acquainted."

In the ordinary course of things I suppose the "Two Forlorn Maids" would have to wait for a formal introduction, and until that introduction came they might never speak to the strange girls towards whom they feel so much attracted, although, in the event of their death, they might think it becoming to attend their funerals. Now all this difficulty over a very simple matter strikes me as being decidedly Oriental. We know very well that with those polite and ceremonious nations the simplest acts of life are regulated by a code beside which the laws of the Medes and Persians are fugitive thoughts. Why, among ourselves, men have been known to brush shoulders with each other for years without speaking, because, although members of the same club, there had been no one to pronounce the mysterious formula—Mr. A., Mr. B.; Mr. B., Mr. A. The wits have made merry over it. Is there not somewhere a story of two travellers who set out from the same Swiss hotel on the same morning, ascended the same toilsome peak for hours without exchanging a word, gazed at the same view from the same summit, glared at each other, then turned and descended again, still without uttering a syllable, simply because they were not introduced. If this story is not true—and I do not vouch for it—well, it ought to be, for it hits us off and our island peculiarities with a very happy effect. Let "Two Forlorn Maids" find an opportunity of exchanging a few words with the girls to whom they feel innocently drawn. A thousand excuses will do to break the ice of reserve. A simple "Good morning!" asking the way, or the hour—anything will suffice. They will soon be able to recognise by the strangers' speech, by their manner, if the approach is welcome. An acquaintance will thus be begun that may ripen into a close and happy friendship. The "GIRL'S REALM Guild of Service and Good Fellowship" was inaugurated to try to overcome this diffidence between strangers. It was one of the most urgent reasons for its formation. It has opened the way for lonely girls to make friends with other girls. It has allowed girls with a touch on the world's activities to share their knowledge and opportunities with girls less privileged than themselves, who yet were strangers to them. It has helped invalids to find consolation in the sympathy of unknown girls eager to give it to one belonging to the great fraternity of suffering.

There are other speculations that the Coronation opens to us. What will be the position of the girls who are to become the women of the new reign? Compare the limited life, the few opportunities for culture that was their share at the beginning of the late Queen's reign. How different is their outlook on the world now. How large and bustling is their life at school and at college. How great are the privileges offered in the professions slowly opening to them. No wonder the "new girl," as the girl of the period is being called, is somewhat loud, perhaps aggressive, in her exhilaration over her acquired kingdom. But the new girl is only trying her wings in the blue heaven of freedom; presently she will come down to earth, and while retaining the good that is hers by right, she will acknowledge that, to the true woman, her larger sympathies, her wider knowledge of the world's suffering and the world's wants, the independence of spirit, a more virile education has given her, are good only in so much as they fit her to be a helpmeet to man in his work for the world.

PREDESTINED.

AUNT BETTY: Are you a good sailor, Johnny?

JOHNNY: I've never been on the sea, Auntie, but I s'pose I must be, 'cos I've worn sailor suits as long as I can remember.

THE PEOPLE OF LONGFELLOW.
A SERIES OF SEVEN PICTURES
BY W. L. TAYLOR,
OF WHICH THIS IS THE SEVENTH.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

"And children coming home from school
Look in at the open door;
They love to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar."

—*See Editor's note on page* 824.

A PAINTER OF GARDENS.

An Interview with Miss Ella Du Cane,

The successful Girl-Artist who has been honoured by Royal Commissions.

BY ALICE STRONACH.

With photographs of the pictures by Russell and Sons, Wimbledon.

A BEAUTIFUL ITALIAN GARDEN OVERLOOKING LAKE COMO.

MANY are the poets and painters who have owed their best inspirations to a garden. Among modern painters of gardens none has won greater distinction than Miss Ella Du Cane, who recently appeared in these pages as one of the girls of whom Essex is proud. She is essentially an Essex girl, bound to her county by the associations of many generations. The name is of Flemish origin, and Miss Du Cane's ancestors were among the Protestants who, in the sixteenth century, sought refuge in England from the persecutions by the Catholics under the Duke of Alva. In the eighteenth century a certain Peter Du Cane, son of a rich merchant, bought Braxted Hall, and began making the collection of statues and pictures which has since become famous, showing the artistic taste inherited by the subject of our sketch.

To her mother, Lady Du Cane, the daughter of Lord Lyndhurst, and granddaughter of John Singleton Copley, R.A., the well-known painter of battle pictures, Miss Du Cane doubtless owes a share of her heritage of artistic talent.

Something of this bit of family history was known to the writer of this article when, one day in mid-June, she turned her back on a London frenzied with Coronation fever and took train for Wickham, the nearest station to Mountains, where Lady Du Cane had said her daughter would be found.

An hour's journey through lush meadows, where the grass and trees showed all the fresher for the rains of a phenomenally rainy June, past railway sidings where the gorse blazed gloriously, brought the traveller to the little wayside station of Wickham Bishops, a few miles beyond Witham.

From the station the road wound "uphill all the way"; past old-world cottages, to whose peaceful hearths only the faintest echo of Coronation news had come; past Beacon Hill, the highest point of Essex, marked by a cot and garden which Miss Du Cane has painted; past plantations of trees whose tops were stirred by the fresh breeze, until we drew rein at a white gate hospitably open.

A short drive ended at the door of a charming but unpretentious house, half hidden in

AN HERBACEOUS BORDER AT MOUNTAINS,
Miss Du Cane's Home.

THE HISTORIC GARDENS OF HOLLAND HOUSE.
The Home of Lord Ilchester.

roses. A gate of wrought-iron gave an alluring glimpse of the garden beyond, which Miss Du Cane's pictures have immortalised. The artist, seizing one of the rare intervals of sun in a sunless summer, had gone forth sketching; but her two sisters, who share with her in the care of the garden, were busy there, and willingly left their pleasant duties to tell me something of her work and travels, until the rain drove the artist herself home to finish the chronicle of a life, still short in years, but long in industrious achievement.

From Miss Du Cane and her sisters, who are naturally proud of her success, I learned that the artist owes almost everything to her natural talent. She has had no regular training beyond a few lessons in drawing and perspective from a governess, and, later, one or two lessons from Sir James Linton. Except Mr. Alfred Parsons, whose work she greatly admires, Miss Du Cane has come but little under the influence of other artists. She never drew from life, and regrets her loss of such discipline; but, gifted with a keen sensitiveness to beauty, especially to beauty of colour, she taught herself as a mere child to paint in water-colours, and ten years ago, when she came to live at Mountains, she began more seriously to turn her talents to account, inspired by the beautiful surroundings of her home.

"I paint out of doors as far as possible, but this weather is a great hindrance to work," Miss Du Cane remarked, as we waited for the shower to cease to make a pilgrimage round the garden. "I was to go off to-morrow to paint a garden, a commission, but have just had a wire postponing the engagement."

A FRUIT-BOAT ON THE LAGOON, VENICE.
Miss Du Cane is especially happy in her Italian pictures.

Miss Du Cane has no painting-room or studio other than her garden, and she not only paints there, but also takes her share in the practical gardening with her sisters. The beauty of the gardens, the masses of colour, and the absence of conventional arrangement, show the artist hand and eye. Borders ablaze with colours less brilliant than those in "an autumn study" of them, bought by the Prince of Wales, and exhibited at Miss Du Cane's show, a few weeks ago, at the Graves Galleries, delight the eye. Great scarlet poppies, clumps of columbine, and masses of irises, or Florentine lilies, in many shades, show up against a background of yellow Scotch rose-trees and ivy-covered walls. A hedge of roses, delightfully arranged in festoons, separates the upper garden from

A STREET IN GRENADA, WEST INDIES.

a lower one, and beyond the hedge is a glorious view of the wide sweep of downs sloping to the distant Blackwater, which, with its barges, has figured in many of Miss Du Cane's landscapes.

"That was a ploughed field when we came here," one of the artist's sisters said, as she pointed to the wild garden, a leafy hollow with flowering shrubs, golden gorse, and a fascinating tangle of wild flowers nestling in the undergrowth. This charming wilderness was the subject of one of the pictures purchased by the late Queen, and, so brilliant was the colour, that a benighted London journalist might well be forgiven for his error in describing it as "A Garden in Florence." As we walked along the garden paths, past the many-hued poppies which seem to be one of the artist's favourite flowers, the talk passed to gardens other than her own which she has painted, for her summers are, for the most part, pleasantly spent in visiting famous country houses in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, painting gardens for their owners. Many are the stories that Miss Du Cane could doubtless tell of such expeditions, and of her varied experiences of climate and of famous hostesses. So numerous are the gardens she has painted that in some cases she had to consult her sister—much to that young lady's amusement—as to their names, which she herself had forgotten.

Early in her career, Miss Du Cane's work attracted the notice of the late

A LILY PERGOLA, AMALFI.

Miss Du Cane speaks of Amalfi, in Italy, as her "best painting ground."

ONE OF ENGLAND'S STATELIEST HOMES: BLICKLING HALL, NORFOLK.

Queen, and the Princess of Wales, and these royal ladies were among her first patrons, purchasing her works and giving her commissions to paint their gardens. She has painted at Windsor a good deal, and has sketched the gardens at Frogmore when the shrubs were in flower. Her picture of the "Rhododendron Walk" at Windsor was one of her earliest successes. At Osborne, she painted the terrace garden, with its masses of red geranium and blue lobelia, and its prospect of blue sea and fringe of white coast.

The gardens at Chatsworth; Lord Ilchester's historic gardens at Holland House, Kensington; of Crichel, where Lady Alington has her famous "White Farm"; Lady Algernon Gordon-Lennox's gardens at Broughton Castle; the far-famed gardens of the late Lady Lothian at Blickling; Lord Sandwich's garden at Hinchinbrooke, and the quaint Italian garden with clipped yews at Haddon Cottage, a sketch purchased by the Prince of Wales—are some of the English gardens which Miss Du Cane has immortalised on canvas, and one of her recent subjects was a bit near the water-lily pond in Mr. Leopold de Rothschild's garden at Gunnersbury.

"I have painted many Scotch gardens too," was her reply to the natural question of a Scotch interviewer; "but your climate does not lend itself to much outdoor work," she added with a laugh. "That sketch of the garden at Cawdor Castle I did when on a visit to Lady Leven. I also painted the Hartrigg gardens and those of Mr. Baird's place in Ayrshire—I forget its name—and Lord Elphinstone's gardens at Carberry, just outside Edinburgh."

THE GARDEN OF CAWDOR CASTLE.
The seat of Lord Leven.

"And Drummond Castle, in Perthshire," I added, remembering a charming picture bought by the Prince of Wales. Gwydyr Castle garden is one of Miss Du Cane's Welsh subjects.

"And Irish gardens?" I asked, completing our mental wanderings through British gardens.

"In Ireland I painted Lady Kenmare's gardens near Killarney."

Gardens further afield have also provided Miss Du Cane with subjects. Her winters are usually spent in travelling, often with one of

her sisters, and she naturally seeks places where flowers abound.

"My best painting ground," she said, in answer to a question, "is Southern Italy, and I am especially fond of Amalfi." Her words sent one's thoughts back to her recent exhibition and to the beautiful studies of rose-grown *pergolas* and convent and villa gardens in sunny Italy, more than one of which was bought by the Queen.

The Lake of Como is another of the garden-lover's favourite painting grounds, and her sketch of the "Villa Carlotta" on that lake was one of Queen Alexandra's purchases.

"That is a glimpse of Lady Paget's garden at Bellosguardo, just outside Florence," she said, pointing to one of the photographs, and our talk drifts to the lovely gardens and rose-grown terraces round the City of Flowers.

In Italy, however, Miss Du Cane does not confine herself exclusively to gardens, and some of her most delightful sketches are of the lagoons and beautiful architecture of Venice, which recall earlier work, on the canals of Holland, and in the quaint old towns of Belgium.

Cannes and Nice and other sunny haunts of pleasure-seekers have also been depicted by Miss Du Cane, and her pictures of gardens in Algiers recall winters spent there.

"I have spent two winters in Madeira, and only last April, before the eruptions took place, returned from a six months' visit to the West Indies." Much charming work has resulted from those winter sojourns.

One of the Madeira sketches was bought by the Prince of Wales, then Duke of York, at Miss Du Cane's exhibition, and was promptly carried off by his Royal Highness to present to the Queen on her birthday. Another of the Prince's purchases was a sketch called "Log-wood in Grenada."

"But east, west, hame's best," and, in spite of the vagaries of the English climate, Miss Du Cane returns after her winters in sunny lands to lavish some of her best skill on the beautiful gardens of her own home and those of her friends, and of the cottagers in the neighbourhood. The Essex people are naïvely proud of the part their gardens play in her success, and some of them find their way to her "one man" or, rather, "one woman" shows, which have been held annually at the Graves Galleries, Pall Mall—shows where a goodly crop of red stars bear silent but eloquent witness to the artist's success.

"One day I am going to write a book on gardens," Miss Du Cane said; and the subject proves so fascinating that only the necessity of catching the last up-train to town brings it to a close.

The drive down the steep road that leads to Witham, and the railway journey back to London were a fitting close to the afternoon, for the western sky was all ablaze with the fiery gold of such a sunset as is only to be seen in a flat country like Essex. Then twilight blots the colours of the gorse and the trees to an inky black, just as the process of reproduction robs the pictures of this charming young painter of the colour which is its crowning glory.

THE LAND THAT IS CALLED "LONG AGO."

There's a lane where the blackberries grow,
A lane only you and I know,
Where the hedge is so high that it tickles the sky,
In the Land that is called "Long Ago."

There's a stream that is winding and slow,
Where bulrushes whisper and blow,
Where the kingfisher dives and forget-me-not thrives,
In the Land that is called "Long Ago."

There's a garden lies sheltered and low,
With gillyflowers all of a row,
Where the cabbage rose blooms and the bumble bee booms,
In the Land that is called "Long Ago."

There's a Land—'tis the fairest, I trow,
Do you see it in sunshine or snow—
That, once on a time, was yours and was mine,
The Land that is called "Long Ago."

A. L. Harris.

The Jäger's Daughter:

A THRILLING STORY OF THE MOUNTAINS.

BY FRANK SAVILE.

Author of "How Signa was revenged," "The Girl who held up the River," &c.

Illustrated by B. E. MINNS.

THE home of Marta lay snug among the dark pine trees that fringed the spurs of the Palu di Morgho, a rocky, snow-clad peak of the Rhaetian Alps that towered above the forest. A streamlet trilled past the little garden plot that fronted the cottage, trickling almost noiselessly when the summer droughts were long, roaring in sudden fury when a storm broke across the hills or when the early spring sunlight melted the snows of the upper ranges. Save for the lilt of birds or the rustling of the squirrels that scampered through the pine fronds, the song of the torrent was the only break in the great stillness. If her father, Stefan Schapfer, or her brother, Jan, were out, Marta heard no voice but her own. The nearest village was a dozen miles away.

It was lonely, no doubt, more lonely than many of us, accustomed to seeing our fellow creatures every minute of the day, could bear. But Marta never noticed it. To begin with, she had a lot to occupy her. The wood for the stove had to be chopped and split, the rooms had to be cleaned and tidied, and her father's meals made ready for evening. Then the garden claimed a good deal of her attention. Potatoes, barley, leeks, cabbages, and many another thing were grown in that little patch, and all the sowing, planting, and weeding fell to her share. And a jäger's clothes take a lot of mending, far more than an English gamekeeper's would require: he has not only pheasants and partridges to look after and protect, but he has to follow the bear, and the chamois, and the wild cat to their lairs, and this means covering a country that has little pity on shoe-leather and cloth. And if there was no mending or gardening or housework to be done, then there was always the hay to be gathered on the rocky ledges far up the cliffs, or if it had been gathered, it took many a long hour to bring it down the steep slopes little by little and store it in the barn. There was plenty to do.

And Marta loved the life. She loved to be out in the cool dawn, watching the tomtits skipping and chirruping among the fir cones; to stand silent and motionless as the squirrels ran furtively with nuts and acorns to their winter storehouse; to mount up to the fringe of the forest, where the bare rocks soared away in terraces to the gleaming snow-line, and to hear the shrill whistling cry of the chamois as buck called to buck across the dizzy chasms, while now and again a dark, burly mass would come paddling through the thickets, and the low, grunting cough would tell her that a bear was foraging for roots and wild honey.

In winter, perhaps, it was not quite so nice. A great blizzard would whirl down from the gorges, bring a cloud of snowdrift, and sometimes the little house would be buried yards deep in the dazzling carpet of white. Then it took time and a good deal of hard work to dig a passage into the open, and the result was often chilblains or frozen fingers. And at night the long moaning howl of the wolves woke her from sleep, and at the full of the moon she could see them

slink about the open space beside the house and sniff beneath the heavily-barred door of the cow-house. Yet, even in winter, there were glorious days, when the sun shone on the frost crystals in the fir trees, and wonderful blue lights and shadows grew upon the frozen streamlet, and the avalanches roared from the crags in clouds of flying snow. On these days Jan, her younger brother, would bring out his sled, and the two children would struggle through the drifts to the slopes below the pine wood, and have the finest fun in the world, rushing down one side of a little valley and half way up the other before the force of their descent was stopped. Days like those made up for weeks of storm and imprisonment in the house.

Marta's father was employed by the Graf Ferdinand Raknozcy, and the stretch of mountain he guarded extended for miles along the Alps. Though, as I have said, there was a good deal of different kinds of game to be looked after, it was the chamois that the Graf cared most about. In the early autumn, when the bright colours began to show upon the stunted oak and beech below the pines, there was always a party of half-a-dozen sportsmen assembled in the hunting lodge in the valley, and day after day Stefan's master and his guests were upon the mountain with their rifles, either stalking the wild creatures from crag to crag, or else hidden in appointed places behind the boulders, waiting while Stefan and a score of the peasants from the plain beat the cliffs and drove the herds towards them.

It was one October day, after the last drive of the season, that Stefan came into his house, flung his hat upon the table, and made an announcement to his children that frightened them terribly.

"As likely as not, this is the last winter we shall spend in our home here," said Stefan, sorrowfully.

Marta gave a cry of astonishment. "What!" she exclaimed, "leave our home—leave the forest!" and little twelve-year-old Jan could only echo her words, so amazed was he.

Their father shook his head.

"It is only too true. The Graf is not pleased with me. It is about the chamois. They grow less every year. Last season they shot between forty and fifty. This season it has been a bare thirty. And they shoot well, those friends of his. It is not the fault of the guns. The herds are not there."

"But how is that your fault?" said Marta, indignantly. "You cannot *make* chamois for him."

"Ay," said Stefan, "but I ought to be able to protect them. It is my fault—in a way. They are being poached. Some one—and I can well guess who—is stealing them, though how I cannot tell."

"Black Andrew!" [illegible] at once. "Black Andrew—[illegible] proper name—was the most [illegible] the district, and there was little [illegible] named him without any hesitation.

"Yes," agreed Stefan, [illegible] villain of a gipsy, but how, I [illegible] do it? I have not grown deaf. [illegible] sharp enough. I will [illegible] shot been fired on my [illegible] should have heard it. [illegible] How can he do it—how can he [illegible]"

Stefan was not exaggerating. In the clear air of the mountain tops the sound of a shot carries for miles. It hardly seemed [illegible] jäger himself and his two [illegible] hours of the day, that a rifle should not be heard by one of the three. And yet the chamois were disappearing month by month.

"It is not as if they were [illegible] the next one," went on the keeper [illegible] on the far side of the hill, [illegible] better with him. His herds are [illegible] There is some cunning device at work, [illegible] I can unravel it, our home here [illegible] up. The Graf was quite decided about it."

"What did he say?" asked Marta.

"He said, 'I like you, Stefan—I believe you are an honest, hard-working man—but what I want is a keeper who can show me a good herd of chamois. You, on the contrary, are letting them get fewer and fewer year by year. If things are not altered by next autumn I must find some one else, though I shall be sorry enough to part with you. But apparently, if you stay, I shall not have a buck left upon the estate. You shall have this next year as your last chance. If we kill more chamois next season, well and good—you stay. If not, you go. That is quite plain, is it not?'"

The tears gathered in Marta's eyes.

"Where could we go?" she whimpered.

"Where indeed?" asked Stefan, shrugging his shoulders despairingly. "Who would take a jäger dismissed for not knowing his business? However," he went on, with an attempt at hopefulness, "we have twelve months before us. Who knows—perhaps by then something will have been discovered. But you are quite right in your guess—it is Black Andrew and [illegible] at the bottom of the business—of that I am quite certain in my mind. We must [illegible]

thoughts to checkmating him, and when I am not abroad upon the hill side, Jan must be. We shall not be able to leave the beat unwatched a single moment. And if I get a chance to present Master Andrew with a bullet, believe me, he won't have to wait long for it."

This may sound rather bloodthirsty to us in England, but in the Austrian Empire game-keeping is a much sterner business than it is this side of the Channel. A poacher, if a keeper catches him red-handed slaying chamois or other game, shoots at him as a matter of course, and it is by no means uncommon for the poacher to shoot back. In fact, among the gipsies, who are the worst poachers, the matter is carried a point further, and they will lay in wait for a jäger, and shoot him from behind a rock or a tree, if they have a grudge against him, and often themselves escape scatheless. In the lonely wilds of the mountain many a tragedy is perpetrated that is never brought to light. A body is found, sometimes a jäger's, sometimes a poacher's, but there is no one to tell at whose hands the life was sped. And sometimes not even the body is found. The gorges are deep; the snow lies thick in the shadows, and often does not melt from winter to winter. A keeper is missed, searched for, and never found, and though a man may be suspected, there is no evidence to bring him to trial. And so the ceaseless feud goes on.

Marta and Jan strolled off sadly into the forest after their father had left them, and took counsel together. The autumn sun was filtering down between the pine tops, the birds were singing, the wealth of colour was spread gloriously abroad on the valley at their feet. Never had their home and its surroundings looked more entrancing. Marta hid her face in her hands and burst into tears.

"It would kill me to leave it—it would kill me," she sobbed; and little Jan, though he thought it unmanly to cry, found it very hard to choke back his tears. He stroked his sister's hand sympathetically.

"Fancy going elsewhere—to a town, perhaps," went on Marta, "to live among the smoke, and the din, and the gloom, and to know all the while that the sun was shining like this upon the hill, the breeze singing to the brook and the brook to the breeze, the birds, the squirrels, the bees, the garden—" Her sobs overcame her. She could only weep and weep, and Jan could think of nothing to comfort her.

Suddenly she raised her head, wiped her eyes, and gave a little stamp. "I am a little fool and a coward to sit and cry idly like this, when we ought to be acting," she said. "We shan't go, Jan—no, we shan't. If father does not defeat Black Andrew, then you and I will. It ought to be simple enough. Somewhere about the mountain he lurks and kills the chamois. After all, it is not so easy to kill them. They are as shy and timid as hawks. It ought to be as easy for us to catch him as for him to catch the bucks. And we'll do it!" she cried decisively, stamping her little foot for the second time.

Jan scratched his head meditatively.

"How?" he asked bluntly.

"Of course I don't know how," said Marta, a little irritated, "but we shall find out. It's three to one. We are bound to win, or, at any rate, if we don't, we deserve to lose."

Jan, who was not self-reliant, reflected that two of the three were a girl of fourteen and a boy of twelve respectively, which made the odds appear to him more like one and three-quarters, perhaps, than three. He said so. Marta was not put out.

"Age has nothing to do with it," she answered, loftily. "It is a question of right and wrong. Those in the right always beat those in the wrong." Which may be a very good principle, and in the end generally happens as she said. But sometimes the wicked flourish for a time before their misdeeds come home to them. And certainly for the next six months Black Andrew so flourished.

"I hear that Andrew Czatmar sold a couple of chamois kids in Roveredo a week back," said Fortunato Batti, the jäger on the next beat, to Stefan one day in the middle of the following May. "He has been at his tricks again. And I hear, too, that he has furnished half-a-dozen pelts to Martin, the skin curer, during the winter."

Stefan shrugged his shoulders wearily. The winter campaign had not been a success. He had spared himself sleep and rest to be abroad ceaselessly on his beat. Neither gales nor snow-drifts had daunted him, and during the few hours' sleep he had to snatch to keep himself in health, his place had always been taken by Jan. The two had been unremitting in their vigilance, but never a sign of Andrew or of his doings had come to light. And this was their reward! The poacher was as successful as ever, and was laughing at their efforts. The kids, too! That was a serious business. He could only have caught them, Stefan considered, by shooting the dam, and yet never a shot had been fired, as far as he could tell, from one end of the winter to the other. He could only groan at Fortunato's intelligence, and turn away, sick at heart. The children

learned of it when he returned to his evening meal.

"It comes to this," said he finally, "we must make up our minds to leave. I am not fit to be a keeper. That is the long and the short of it."

But Marta had other ideas. The winter had not given her or her brother a real chance. The drifts had been too deep and the storms too heavy for them to penetrate to the upper ranges, where the chamois mostly congregate, but now open weather was with them again, she meant to start her own campaign. As she and Jan made their way one morning up the ridge behind the house, she began to explain her plans to him.

"What Fortunato says proves that it is Andrew who is doing this poaching," she said. "To me other things appear proved also. He does it at night, for one thing."

"Why?" demanded Jan.

"Because it would be impossible for him to have done it so often in the day time, and escape being seen or heard. You and father have been upon the ranges every day from dawn to dusk, yet you have never had a glimpse of him."

Jan nodded. "That's true enough," he agreed.

"The other thing is that he does not shoot them — he catches them."

Jan gave an incredulous cry.

"Catches them!" he scoffed. "How can you catch chamois? By running!"

"I don't care what you say," retorted Marta. "Of course he does not run after them, but he *does* catch them, and without a rifle. How is it possible that he has not been heard, otherwise?"

"I don't know," said Jan, "but I have never heard of full-grown chamois bucks being caught except by a bullet, and I shall have to see it done before I believe."

Marta nodded her head importantly.

"I am going to see it done if I wait months," she said, decidedly. "I am not going to give up living here for all the poachers in the world!"

"But how?" asked Jan.

"This way," said Marta. "I am going to spend a good deal of time upon the higher cliffs, when you and father do not; and at a time that you will not be expected—at night."

"At night!" echoed Jan. "How can he possibly shoot at night—"

Marta interrupted angrily. "Haven't I told you he *doesn't* shoot?" she cried. "And, even if he did, some moonlight nights you could see a chamois a hundred yards away."

Jan never quarrelled with Marta, being of a peace-loving disposition; so he said no more in opposition. But he asked to be allowed to accompany her on her first expedition to the snow-line, and she was graciously willing to accept his company. Yet, in his little heart, much as he admired his sister, he had very faint hopes of her plan succeeding.

And the events of the next month did not tend

JAN AND MARTA TRACK BLACK ANDREW, THE POACHER.—(*p.* 786.)

to make him more hopeful. Night after night the two scrambled and peered and climbed from peak to peak and ledge to ledge, but never a sign of Black Andrew appeared, and never a shot broke the stillness of the ranges. But Marta was not put out.

"It would be almost a miracle if we did catch him at once," she said to her brother, "so I am not a bit disheartened. We want patience, which, after all, is not expensive. You can always have as much as you want."

Then one bright moonlight night in June, they made the great discovery which convinced even the doubting Jan.

They were sitting together after a long climb, eating the little store of rye bread that they always brought with them on their expeditions, for, as they slept a good deal in the day time, they had to have their meals at queer hours. They were at a height where the snow begins to dot the cliffs in irregular patches, before it sweeps away unbrokenly to the glaciers that fill the shoulder of the peak. Below them was a deep, shadowed cleft in the hill-side, the bottom of it still thick with the winter's drift, and on the great snowfield above them the moonlight glared down brightly. They were tired and a little despondent, and so were silent, munching their bread, and scooping up handfuls of snow to make it taste less dry and chaff-like. Suddenly Jan nudged his sister sharply.

"Look!" he whispered beneath his breath.

Three dark figures were coming at a good pace across the snow, making for the entrance of the little gorge below. One was much larger than the other two, and the children recognised in a moment that it was a chamois hind, followed by her kids; and they knew that for her to be moving from the rocks to the snow at night was because she had been disturbed. They stared on anxiously.

The hind came on right up to the entrance to the gorge, and then lifted her head and sniffed suspiciously. The wind was blowing from them to her, and no doubt she got the faint taint of human presence, and resented it. She stamped her feet and looked round at the kids at her heels. Then, with a sudden plunge, she cantered straight into the shadow below them, and passed along it down the very centre of the gully.

Half way along the narrow chasm an overhanging rock hid her from the children's eyes. They saw her approach it—it was not thirty yards wide—and waited expectantly to see her reappear on the far side. But the seconds went by—lengthened into a minute—two minutes—but no chamois was to be seen. Marta looked at her brother in bewilderment.

"Why has she stopped?" she whispered.

But Jan was not attending to her. He was staring out along the rocks that fringed the great snowfield on the valley side, breathing hard, and filled with excitement. He turned and said two words that made Marta tremble with alertness.

"Black Andrew!" said Jan.

Marta rubbed her eyes and followed the direction of his finger. A dark object was worming its way from point to point along the rocks, skirting the snow, and making, like the hind, for the entrance of the gorge. That it was a man there was no possible doubt, and that it was the man they sought the two children were convinced. A few minutes put the matter beyond a doubt.

He passed below them, his short rifle tucked under his arm, his hat cocked jauntily upon his head, and no haste in his going. And yet the chamois had not bolted from her lair behind the rock. The children crouched into the shadow in amazement. Had he some way of mesmerising the poor beasts that they waited for his coming. As he, too, disappeared behind the crag, they waited with ears alert for the shot that must follow the breaking away of the hind and kids. But not a sound broke the stillness.

They stared and whispered. Once or twice a faint, whimpering cry, such as the chamois kids give in answer to their dams, seemed to float up to them, but they could not be sure that it was not their own fancy. Time passed. There was no other sound. Black Andrew, like the hind, had passed into the shadow without emerging on the far side. And the two children, utterly at a loss, could only sit and sit on as they were, afraid to move lest their movement might betray them. And then, after half an hour of silence, Andrew reappeared, heavily laden.

Strapped across his shoulders was the chamois, her head drooping limply from her cut throat, and bound and bunched against his breast on each side were the kids, making plaintive little sounds and struggling faintly with limbs and heads. They were neatly wrapped up in sackcloth bags, and from the careful, accustomed manner in which he carried them, Andrew was evidently not doing it for the first time. He strode up the gorge, gained the rocks, and disappeared into the shadows as he had come. Then Jan broke the silence.

"I beg your pardon, Marta," said he solemnly, "he does catch them without shooting. He is a wizard."

Marta shook her head impatiently.

"WITH A DESPERATE WRITHE, MARTA ROLLED OVER THE EDGE OF THE CLEFT, AND FELL WITH A CRASH AGAINST BLACK ANDREW, CUTTING HIS LEGS FROM UNDER HIM."—(*p.* 789).

"Nonsense!" she cried. "There are no such things, as you ought to know well enough. He has a trap down there. That is what I always suspected."

Jan opened his eyes very wide.

"How could he know that the chamois would pass that way?" he asked, "so why should he set a trap?"

"That I can't tell you," said Marta, "till we have been down and examined the place, so it's no good talking. Come along," and she began to scurry down the rocks into the cleft like a rabbit. Jan followed, protesting. "I should have followed him and had him arrested," he expostulated. But Marta would have none of it. "He has a rifle, and you are only a little boy," she said. "He would kill you, and toss your body into a crevasse, and that would be the end of you. There is plenty of time to catch him. You may be sure he has been here before, and will be again," and she slid down the slope below the crags like a little avalanche.

They rounded the screening rocks, to find—nothing. At least, nothing appeared except a white and gleaming snowdrift. But Marta soon began to make discoveries. She pointed out a brown lump upon the rocks and ran towards it. She wetted her finger, touched the substance, and carried her finger to her lips.

"I thought as much," said she, as she tasted it. "It is salt."

Jan nodded as he, too, put the tip of his tongue against it. "That is the bait," said he, "but where is the trap. What held the hind here till Andrew arrived?"

They began to examine the drift carefully.

I should, perhaps, explain that chamois will travel long distances for salt. In some of the mountain caves it exists naturally, and they are quick to find it. Andrew had made use of this circumstance to attract the chamois into the gorge. The next thing was to find out how he trapped them when they got there.

One thing they noticed very soon. The track of the chamois and the kids came up to a point short of the lump of salt, and then halted suddenly. Yet there was no sign of their having turned. Marta bent and examined the snow carefully.

"The drift has been swept over," she announced. "See, here are Andrew's footsteps *going* into it, but not returning, and here are more footsteps *coming out* of it at quite a different place. He has raked the snow together behind him."

"Then, of course," said little Jan, "the trap lies beneath the snow that has no tracks on it," and he dashed into the middle of the patch. The next minute he had stumbled, thrown up his hands, and disappeared with a loud cry. The mystery was a mystery no longer. He had crashed into a pit, covered over lightly with boughs, and with the white carpet of snow raked carefully over that. No wonder Andrew was certain of finding his quarry waiting for him. The pit was a natural one, a deep, overhung crevice in the rock, and probably the sight of it had put the idea into his head. It was nearly twenty feet deep, and as Marta crept up to the edge and looked over, she saw her brother squatting on the boughs that had fallen with him, disconsolately rubbing his head. Though nearly stunned, he had come to no great harm, owing to the pine branches breaking his fall.

He did not find so much difficulty in getting out. The end of the cleft narrowed very much, and, by getting into the narrowest part, with his back against one side and his feet and hands against the other, he wormed his way to the top, much as a chimney sweep used to worm his way up old-fashioned chimneys. But first he threw back the boughs to Marta. "We do not want Mr. Andrew to know that he is discovered," said the girl, and when Jan joined her, they busied themselves in putting the trap as they had found it, covering it with snow, and concealing, in the same way, their own tracks till they gained the rocks where their footprints left no trail. Then they raced home with the news to their father.

Stefan was delighted. He rubbed his hands, and kissed his daughter with great glee. He took down his rifle, cleaned it carefully, and loaded it. "If that bullet does not find a billet in Andrew's body before the week's over," said he, "may I never fire another shot." And then he arranged with the children that the spot should not be left unwatched for a single hour of the twenty-four. Either he would be there, rifle in hand, waiting, or else the two children should be on guard while he slept, in order that one of them should race down and rouse him. And in this fashion the next six days went by.

Marta and Jan generally took the night watches, as it was easier for them to get sleep in the day, and by the end of the week they were a little tired of it. No Andrew appeared, and no chamois. Once or twice, indeed, they had fancied they had seen a buck or two hurrying across the snow-field, but it had never entered the gorge, so if Andrew was driving them, he had seen this, and had not troubled to examine his trap. But at last he came.

It was in the early hours before the dawn, and Jan was snoring at Marta's side, when the girl saw a dark object on the snow, and a minute later a fine chamois raced into the gorge, passed the overhanging rock, and disappeared. She did not wait to look further. She woke Jan, and sent him flying off in a moment for her father. Even if Andrew did not appear, he must be summoned to extract the chamois from the pit. Jan went off at speed, while Marta nestled down upon her ledge and strained her eyes into the darkness eagerly.

The minutes went by. The moonlight was bright upon the rocks, yet no sign of a man was visible. Half an hour was gone. Nothing happened. She raised her head above the rock she crouched beneath and stared and stared across the cliffs. A heavy hand fell upon her shoulder and thrust her face downward upon the stone. She screamed.

"Less noise, my pretty little spy!" said Black Andrew, as he covered her mouth with his other hand, "or I shall have to still that pipe of yours for ever." Marta, her little heart bursting with terror, looked up at him as a wounded rabbit might look into the cruel eyes of a stoat.

He coolly unwound the bandages with which chamois hunters swathe their legs, bound her wrists and ankles together, and gagged her. Then, when he had her trussed up like a chicken, he bent over her and laughed.

"You weren't quite careful enough when you covered up your tracks the other day, my little maid," he sneered. "I found them. I suspected something, and when, half an hour ago, I saw your brother flitting down the rocks towards your house, I thought it was well to see if he had left any one behind him. I came up the cliff at the back, and walked right upon you. Wasn't that clever—nearly as clever as your own little scheme for my discomfiture?" and he laughed again.

"Now, I am going to give you a great spectacle," he said after a bit. "I am going to set you here. I shall hide below you, and when your father is brought up by Jan, as he will be in half an hour, you will see me shoot him. What do you think of that?"

Poor little Marta nearly fainted with the agony of her mind. She knew that he would do as he said, and she, helpless, bound, gagged and dumb, would have no chance to warn her father of the danger awaiting him. She lay where Andrew had flung her down, immovable, waiting with straining ears for the first sound of footsteps coming from the rocks below. Twenty yards beneath her, on the slope of the gorge, Andrew squatted in the snow-drift, his rifle cocked, his cruel eyes searching the moonlight eagerly.

At last she heard it faintly—the click of nailed boots against the rock. She wriggled and fought against her bonds, but they were immovable. She nearly suffocated as her teeth gnashed upon the gag, but it was tightly fixed. Andrew, too, had heard. He half rose to his feet, and peered across the shadows. And then her father's head topped the rocks and showed out against the gleaming snow behind.

Andrew rose to his full height, and steadied himself. Slowly he brought his rifle to his shoulder, and began to dwell upon his aim. And at that moment, with a desperate writhe, Marta rolled over the edge of the cleft on which she lay, and fell with a crash against him, cutting his legs from under him.

There was a loud cry from the poacher, a cloud of snow whirled up, and man and child all huddled together, flew down the slope in confusion. They landed with a crash in the centre of the gully, and at the same time a shot rang out into the stillness. Andrew's rifle had fallen beneath him, and the trigger smashed upon a boulder edge. The bullet had passed clean through his black heart.

Black Andrew was buried in the very pit that he had used for his chamois trap. Stefan flung his body in, piled the great boulders above it, and then he and Jan led Marta, crying, unstrung, and shuddering, down to their home. But before they got there, the praises her father and brother showered upon her had partly dulled the terror of the awful minute while she waited for that bullet to be sped, and the thought that her father's place was saved to him along with his life, was no small comfort as well. But to this day she never will visit the gorge where Black Andrew lies. "I have seen enough of it to last me a lifetime," she says, though she smiles gladly when her father tells her how pleased the Graf is, and how the chamois have increased upon his beat from year to year.

BUTTERFLIES AND GRASSHOPPER.

Insects Sitting for their Portraits.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

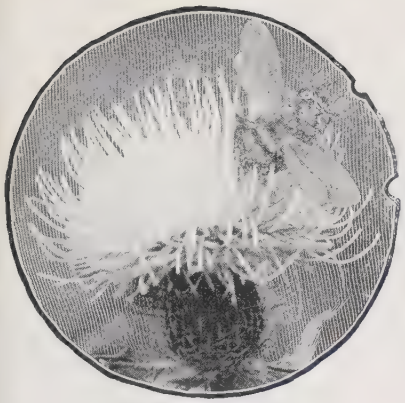
With photographs by Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, *who is almost the only successful photographer of insects from life.*

You are not to think that it is an easy thing to take the portrait of insects. The little portrait gallery illustrating our article represents ten times more patient labour taken than any gallery of celebrities ten times its size. The lady of fashion who goes to the photographer puts herself usually in his hands as clay in the hands of the potter. She is ready to receive his suggestions in the supreme interest of the success of the picture. She puts on her best smile to command, and in some instances (it may fairly be suspected) her best curl. But all this is very much changed when you have to do with an insect for a sitter. His one desire is to get away from you, and if he only suspects your fell intent, he will draw in his horns and everything distinctive about him, and revert, as far as it lies in his vicious little power, to the chrysalis state. You remember what enormous difficulties Mr. Kearton had to overcome in the kindred case of photographing the birds. Many a picture of a bird—which came to us as a matter of course, as a creature feeling at his ease or caught in the very act of headlong flight, taken straight from nature—was the result of the long and patient toil of the photographer under almost impossible conditions. Mr. Kearton had to hide in the branches of trees, remaining immobile with his camera by his side. He had to spend hours inside a mimic ox, watching behind two holes cunningly let into the hide of the enormous wooden animal. He had to remain motionless, waist high in the water, watching for the shy blue Kingfisher to begin its solitary flight. Only thus was he able to surprise the secrets of the birds—catch the mother bird feeding her young; the father bird teaching them to fly. Well, it has been just the same with Dr. R. W. Shufeldt, who is almost the only successful photographer of insects from the life. Here they are, thanks to his subtle stratagems of observation, thanks to the artfulness with which he hides the tell-tale camera. It is quite amusing to hear his confidences about his sitters.

A BEAUTIFUL DRAGON-FLY.

A GARDEN SPIDER.

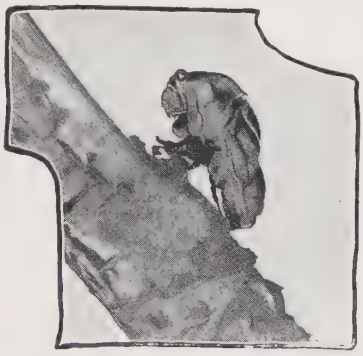
Of course it would be quite easy to take the insect in the best "bib and tucker" fashion, without a suggestion of life and movement, such as we find them in works of ethnology; but to take the insects in their own houses—aye, there's the rub. And there are so many of them to take. Probably over a million of them are known to science, while it would be



A BUMBLE-BEE AND THISTLE.

difficult to estimate the enormous number of them in all the parts of the world that still remain to be described. Both ways of taking them have, of course, their special uses. The photographer may want from the living or the dead insect the materials for illustration of species and its diagnosis, or he may be looking for the infinitely more difficult thing, the appearance of the insects in nature, their haunts and their habits of life. And then, once more, he may be a mere student of the beautiful, delighting in the little creeping and flying creatures for their own sake, and wanting to preserve them as well as he can with the freedom of their marsh or forest life. He does not want to stick them on pins, he does not want to stretch them out for the mere inventory of their charms. He wants only to keep a memorandum of them as he saw them in their beauty on some perfect spring or summer morning. It is in this that girls, in love with all the beauty around them, may like to follow him.

Take, for instance, this wonderfully successful portrait of the Turnus Butterfly and the Lily; it took Dr. Shufeldt a good three-quarters of an hour of patient handling to get this superb fellow to alight just where he wanted him, on one of the lower petals of the flower. The upper part made a beautiful background for him—and this question of backgrounds is very important. If you choose them in the right way, that is to say, at a proper distance from the object in certain cases, you will have a proper suggestion of characteristic details, which at the same time will not be in the least obtrusive. An insect photographed some ten or twelve feet from the foliage in an afternoon sun, with the sitter well in the foreground and in the sunlight, will be perfect, both as to the sitter and as to his surroundings. The distant background is black enough not to interfere with him, and the foliage lacking entirely in definition does not compete with his own charms. All this as pointed out by Dr. Shufeldt himself, and he illustrates it in the picture of the Bumble-bee and the Thistle. Here he says: "I simply selected a fine thistle-top of flowers on one bright afternoon, that grew some several feet away from a bank of dense foliage, and, with the sun at my back, I focussed on the thistle as sharply as possible, and when a hungry bee came along for its evening sip of honey I made an instantaneous snap of the whole, and obtained the result here shown."



A CICADA EMERGING FROM ITS SHELL.

Infinite are Dr. Shufeldt's devices and infinite the power of patient observation which they disclose. "I obtain," he says, "a very similar indoor effect by employing black cambric as a background, and this I sometimes use where I desire to get the full beauty of pure white flowers, and where the insect to be photographed will not suffer by the treatment or the contrast. To illustrate this class of studies I offer my picture of the Bumble-bee and the Dogwood Flowers. Often in the early spring, when the first coming insect may be killed during the night, we find him resting on some flower in the first part of the forenoon, and all one has to do is carefully to clip off with a pair of scissors all of the subject that is desired in the picture, including the insect. Then taking the twig immediately to the studio, fasten it in a little vase screwed to the top of a tripod, and placing the whole affair in the proper light, and running up your black cambric background, take the picture."

A SPIDER CARRYING HER YOUNG IN A SILKEN BALL.

What are you going to do, for instance, with the magnificent Emperor Moth, with his wings of beautiful green, with distinct eye-spots on the inferior pair? Here he has got his effect by

giving to the creature a background of the bark of a particular oak. It is much the same thing with the yellow garden spider. The artist watched for him until "he had spread his pretty web across a morning-glory vine, the growth of the vine affording him quite an open space in the rear, where it was dense, and therefore acting as in the case described above of the bumble-bee and the thistle. Those who have lived in the country parts of the Atlantic States know this fine spider very well, and the peculiar vertical zigzag he makes of pure white web down from the centre of his net, and the funny way he has of violently vibrating the latter when his spidership is disturbed by anything striking him or his snare."

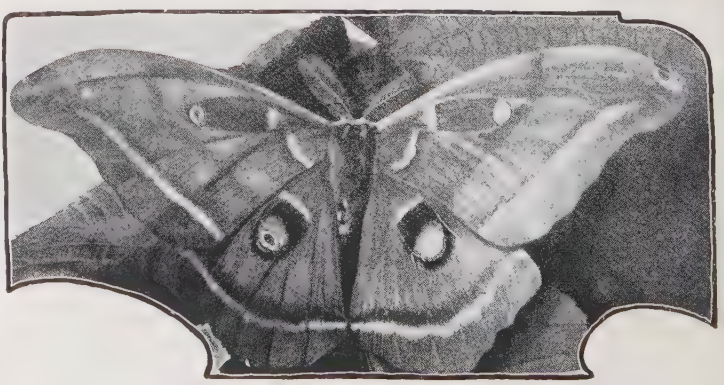
A BUTTERFLY POISED ON A LILY.

A BIG GREEN CATERPILLAR

And just imagine what contrivance must have been involved in the picture of the spider carrying her young family in a silken ball. How did Dr. Shufeldt do it? He just boldly cut out a large sod near by, with very little vegetation upon it, and placed it in position about five feet above the ground. And with a distinct relation to the background, a white background—a sheet of pure white blotting paper is best. Here was the place for the sitter, but still the problem remained, How to get her to sit? The next thing to do was to get the spider to run on to some large leaf, and, in her anxiety to escape, she appears to have fallen in with the arrangement. By taking to the leaf she did not wish, at any rate, to be exactly where she was, feeling herself to be under observation, and she foolishly thought, with many wiser ones amongst us, that the true remedy for every difficulty was a change of scene. All that remained to be done was to remove the leaf to the sod of earth which, of course, had been already put in focus, and crack! the exposure was made at once.

The dragon-fly and the pretty little butterfly and grasshopper were taken by this method in the studio itself. "The latter," says Dr. Shufeldt, "is the veriest little tit-bit of nature, taken directly from the meadow where I found it."

Of effects of fine and striking lighting he gives us an example in the photograph of the Silk-worm Moth, taken very shortly after it had left the cocoon. Here the wings of the right side told light upon the dark linden leaves against which the insect was placed; and the wings of the other side detached themselves darkly against the light background. He illustrates, also, instances of that marvellous instinct some insects possess of self-protection, by imitating so perfectly the substance against which they are placed that it is difficult for the observer to distinguish one from the other. The Sphinx Moth resting,



THE SILK-WORM MOTH IN ALL ITS BEAUTY.
Taken shortly after it had left the cocoon.

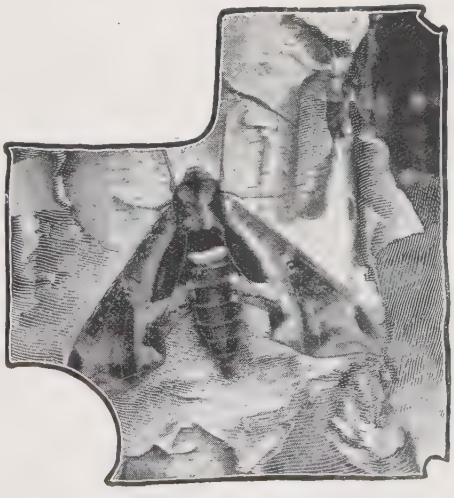
against the trunk of a tree, and the large green caterpillar upon
a green leaf, are very fine ex- amples of this almost miracu-
lous instinct some insects have. The little Cicada, too, emerging
from its shell, is a very interest- ing study of the insect, wingless
as yet, but with its strong fore paws developed, with which he
will shortly divest himself of the impeding coating that
stands between it and its full- fledged power.

A BUMBLE-BEE ON A DOG WOOD FLOWER.

These are but some of the wonders that the camera re-
veals. One of these days per- haps the bees will be photo-
graphed a little more frequently in their own homes; the life
of the hive has been described often enough, but it still re-
mains to be taken from the life. We want some method of
penetrating the secret of the cells while the creatures are
still engaged in all their nu- merous activities. I still think
that some of those who under- take to describe their life to us
write a great deal more from fancy than from observation.
They look in, indeed, but they come prepared to see what
they want to see, and they write into bee-life the facts and fan-
cies which they bring with them. Sometimes these are
the most portentous schemes of politics and philosophy. At
one time the bees were always described as the most monarchical of insects. They all paid homage to an industrious queen; they backed out of her presence, and very little was wanting but an order of Lords and Commons to make the establishment a living image of the British Constitution. The bees, I am inclined to think, got puffed up with this and began to play up to their parts in a way that was decidedly misleading. Then came new theories, in which the community was represented as essentially republican. I imagine these found their starting point in the United States, for remember, national sympathies cover scientific observation as they cover all else.

THE LUNA BUTTERFLY.

I sometimes think the bee and the ant are observed for the sake of the observer, instead of for their own, and that, if they were looked at more disinterestedly, they would the sooner yield up the secret of their wonderful lives. They have their lives, of course, as we have ours, and they are the same miracles of the adaptation of means to ends. But what are the ends? What are the means?



A SPHINX MOTH.

I am pretty certain that in either case they are not meant to exhibit model monarchies or model republics, but rather to exhibit the marvellous design that runs through the whole creation; a design that makes the doings of the loveliest insect as much a matter of wonder as are those of the insects whose more complex organisms have made them the object of the study of ethnologists. If girls will study patiently those little creepy and winged creatures; if they will record with their cameras their strange beauty and their wild ways, they will come a little nearer to the secret of the Universe, and they will feel more poignantly that "the Hand that made them is Divine." They may not be able to attain to the skill of Dr. Shufeldt, but they may be his equal in admiration.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

SYNOPSIS.

PHILIPPA, MADGE, THEO and HOPE, are the four daughters of Edgar Charrington, a man of exceptional genius—artist, musician, and author. He dies, leaving to his four girls and two sons, Stephen and Barnard, the slender legacy of £2,000 with which to equip themselves for the battle of life. The girls have inherited their father's genius: Hope is an accomplished musician; Madge a clever artist; Theo a budding author. Philippa, the eldest girl, is the housekeeper. They come to London, against the advice of Mrs. Loftus, their father's sister, and take a small flat in Tottenham Court Road, and there expend their capital in securing a good start in their various professions. Stephen goes to a solicitor's firm, Barney into an insurance office, and Madge to the Slade School. Hope has been counting much on the help of a Miss Caldecott, a professional singer and friend of her father. When she goes to call on her, however, the singer does not seem much disposed to help, though she promises to consider "something with a catchy refrain" if the girl-composer cares to write it. The girls greatly enjoy life in the flat. Below them lives a crusty bachelor, an author of some note, whom the girls nickname the "Hermit" and treat with much scorn and derision. Barney specially loves to provoke him.

Hope goes to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Loftus at their shooting-box in Norfolk. There she succeeds in awakening in her cousin Avice, a listless and lethargic girl, an interest in poor girls in need of country air, whom Avice plans to invite to a cottage on the estate. Hope meets there a Mr. Ralph Merrilies, who is unusually kind to her. He advises her to organise an entertainment for the amusement of children. Hope would greatly like to be friends with him, but remembers always that Truda Bennett, a vivacious member of the house-party, has warned her that she may "have all the other men," but that she (Truda) is especially interested in Ralph.

CHAPTER XIII.

TRUDA was very silent all the way home—in plain words, she sulked, and refused to give anything more than monysyllabic replies to Hope's gentle overtures. When the house was reached she pleaded headache—that convenient cloak for every feminine ill, from a heartache to bad temper!—and retired to her room for the remainder of the afternoon. Hope went into the empty library and wrote a long letter home, telling all about her new plans, asking Theo's co-operation, and sending a list of certain points to which she wished special attention to be given. She wrote with interest, it is true, but with none of the elation which she had known an hour earlier; for at the back of her mind lay a pressing consciousness that something disagreeable lay before her—a painful situation to be faced so soon as leisure should be hers. When later on she sat before her bedroom fire, in the interval before dressing for dinner, she stared into the heart of the glowing coals and thrashed out the subject—quietly, sweetly, fairly, as her nature was.

Truda was annoyed, and considered that she had been unfairly treated, in that another had monopolised something to which she possessed a prior claim. After that first very candid statement, she had naturally relied on the loyalty of the girl in whom she had confided, and although no actual promise had been given, that girl had also considered herself bound in honour. Had she kept faith? For the most part Hope could honestly answer in the affirmative, but looking back over the last few days she acknowledged that she had been sufficiently off her guard to allow herself

to be monopolised without protest, and so had engrossed the lion's share of Ralph Merrilies' attention. *Without protest!* The blood rushed over Hope's face at the misleading sound of the words! There had been no thought of protest—no wish for it—nothing but purest delight and satisfaction in being thus monopolised. So far from feeling any dismay, her heart had given a leap of triumph each time he had come to her side. What did this mean? Did it—could it possibly be—falling in love! Was she beginning to care more for Ralph Merrilies than for any man whom she had known? She mentally placed the image of one masculine friend after the other beside this acquaintance of a week's standing, and lo! they were as nothing—their weal or woe touched her not at all, compared with the lightest interest of this comparative stranger! *Beginning* to care! She cared already, cared with all her heart, cared more than she had even known it was possible to care. Realising this, Hope grew frightened, and clasped trembling hands together in her lap. What madness was it; what will-o'-the-wisp for which she had bartered her peace? She -Hope Charrington—poor, insignificant, friendless, and he the owner of a fine estate, handsome, distinguished, influential, with the *entrée* into any society which he desired to affect; the world a playground over which to roam! With such a choice open before him, such a stage on which to play his life, how was it possible that he could cast a thought in her direction? What attention he had paid her had been but that which a man would naturally show towards any girl who happened to be to him—for the time at least—the most interesting member of a house-party. Hope did not delude herself that Ralph had any penchant for the lively Truda, but since the two moved in the same circle, and had many opportunities of meeting, it was possible that in time to come he might return the girl's fancy; in any case she could not be the one to stand between them.

"I'll go home!" decided Hope drearily. "My visit is up on Tuesday, and though I know Avice will beg me to stay longer, this children's entertainment will be a good excuse for getting back to town. I'll keep out of his way as much as possible until I go, and forget all about him when I step into the train. Ten days! Only ten days! It must be easy enough to forget a little time like that. It would be cowardly to let ten days interfere with one's life!"

She was very quiet that evening, very subdued all next day, and so much engrossed in helping her aunt that she was hardly seen by the rest of the guests until evening came round. That she had been missed was evident, but while the other men loudly regretted her absence, and plied her with tiresome questions as to its cause, Ralph was silent, watching her face with an anxious glance, and attending to her comfort with even more than his usual quietly unobtrusive care. Hope felt that he had divined a secret trouble, and she was sure of it the next morning after breakfast, when Mrs. Loftus having sent her into the library to write some notes, he suddenly remembered his own correspondence and followed her into the room. Hope would have settled down to work at once, but she could not be so ungracious as to refuse to help in his search for some mislaid articles. In the middle of commonplaces another question was put, suddenly, briefly, but with an earnestness of manner which showed what was his real purpose in following her to the library.

"You are not yourself! Something is troubling you. Have you had bad news?"

Hope fell back a pace and looked at him with startled eyes. Before his earnest scrutiny ordinary denials became impossible; she could answer nothing but the truth.

"Not bad news—no! but something troubles me a little. Please take no notice. It will pass away."

"Is it nothing in which I can help?"

A faint smile flitted across Hope's charming face, and she shook her golden head. "You are very kind, but . . ."

"If I can help at any time, in any way, will you give me the opportunity? Will you believe that nothing could possibly give me so much pleasure?"

He stepped towards her as he spoke, but even as he did so there came from without the sound of Truda's voice, loud and insistent, approaching nearer and nearer to the room. With a shiver of dismay Hope realised that in another moment the door might be thrown open, and a *tête-à-tête* discovered, which, however innocent in reality, would certainly have a romantic appearance in the eyes of a beholder. She broke into a forced laugh and turned aside to seat herself at the desk.

"Oh, thank you! You *have* helped me already by your charming suggestion about the children's entertainment. . . I have written to my sister. I hope to find the story ready when I get home."

Even to her own ears the reply sounded curt and ungracious, an obvious turning aside from the point at issue, and Ralph showed that he felt the same by saying no more, and leaving the room as soon as he had written a short note. It was painful to be obliged to appear ungracious, but painful things have to be done occasionally, and Hope longed for the day to arrive that would put an end to her

suffering. Avice pleaded hard for an extension of her stay, and could only be pacified by the promise of a longer visit in spring, when the Lodge rooms were to be furnished, and the new scheme inaugurated, by which she was to play the part of fairy godmother to poorer girls. That was one good thing that seemed likely to arise from this visit, and it was some compensation to Hope to receive her cousin's affectionate embrace at parting, and to hear her say, "Good-bye, sweet Hope! Don't forget me among all your duties. We shall be in town again in a fortnight, and I shan't be content unless you come at least once a week to see me. You have done me lots of good. I'll try . . . I really will try to think of other people!"

That sent Hope away with a thankful heart and courage enough to go through the farewells downstairs. Her new friends seemed sorry to say good-bye, but it was not a sorrow that would imperil their peace of mind. Truda had received a longed-for invitation to a country house in the neighbourhood, and was in the highest of spirits, and Mr. Merrilies was not present. Hope wondered if she were not to see him to say good-bye, but when she stepped out of the carriage on to the platform of the little station, a tall figure appeared within the threshold of the waiting-room, and Ralph Merrilies stepped forward to meet her.

"I thought I would walk home this way and see you off. Are you alone? Will you come in here beside the fire or walk up and down?"

Hope glanced at the clock, found she had still five minutes to wait, and decided that it would be less embarrassing to move about than to remain within the confines of that little room.

"I shall have to sit still for the next three hours, so I think I will walk about, please, if you don't mind. I hope you will have good sport this afternoon and to-morrow at Benckley. Did Miss Bennett tell you she had received her invitation for next week? She is quite excited about it, for so many of Aunt Emma's guests seem to be going on there. You are one of them, aren't you?"

"I think not. I left it indefinite, and I rather fancy I shall write to say that I must go home. I thought of leaving The Shanty to-morrow or Saturday." He was silent for a moment, his eyes on the ground; then he said suddenly, "You will give me your address? I must have it to give to my sister, who will want to write to you about the date of her party."

"Yes, of course. Thank you so much for remembering. I have not a card in my purse, but our number is ten . . . No. 10, Whately Mansions."

"And may I . . . will you allow me to come to see you sometimes? I am often in town, and it would give me so much pleasure!"

He did not look at her as he spoke, and Hope was thankful that he did not see her flush of dismay. She had never anticipated such a request, and was terrified by a suggestion that would make all her good resolutions of no effect. During every hour of the last three days had she congratulated herself that her time of probation was short, and that with her return home would come back peace and contentment. What prospect of recovery could there be, what chance of work well done, if the expectation of Ralph's coming was ever before her, as the one great possibility of the day? And what would Truda say? The thought that she might perhaps be endangering Truda's happiness nerved her to boldness of speech.

"You are very kind, but we are business women, and our sitting-rooms are our work-rooms also. . . . I fear we shall have to deny ourselves visitors yet awhile!"

She cast a hurried glance at the clock to see how many of the five minutes still remained. Only one! The porter was carrying her box to the farther end of the station, a group of rustics were strolling out of the ticket office, and Mr. Merrilies was saying quietly—

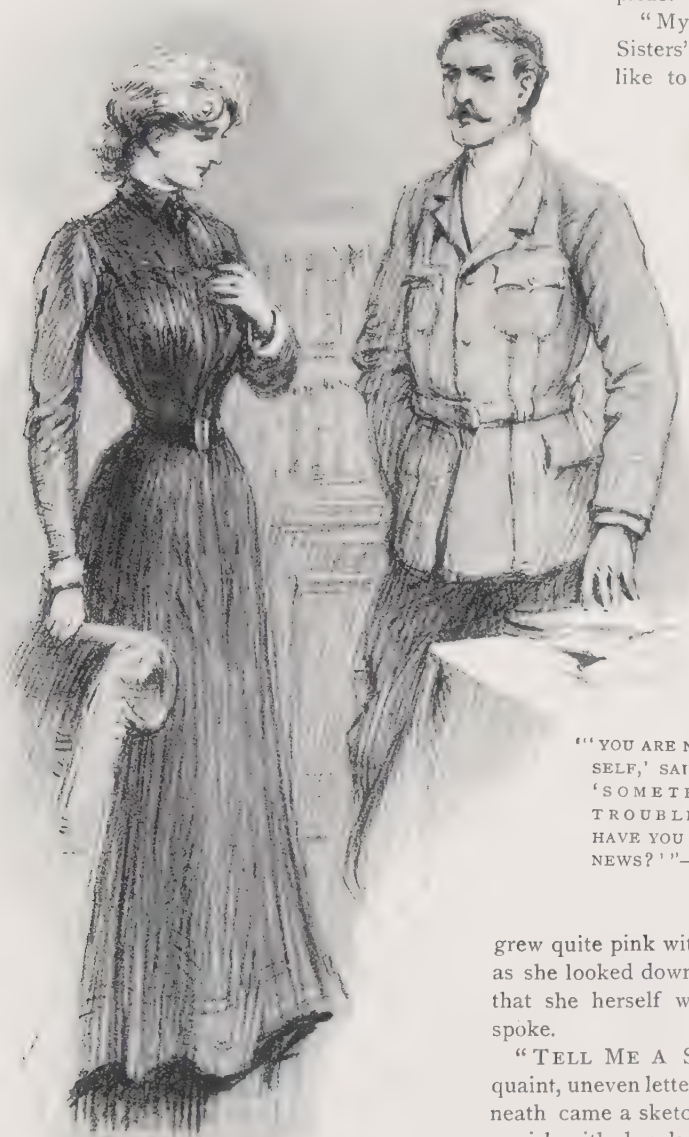
"Art is long! You find, as do all her disciples, that she demands undivided allegiance. . . . I shall look forward to hearing the result of your labours! Here is your train! You would like the small bag in the carriage, wouldn't you?"

There was a note in his voice which gave Hope actual pain to hear, and the remembrance of his set white face was not a pleasant one for her to carry away on her journey.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE little flat looked bright and cheery when the traveller reached home. A new lamp-shade had replaced the one which Mary had burned, sixpennyworth of flowers were displayed to the utmost advantage against a background of dried fern, and the three sisters were beaming with joy at the return of their peacemaker. They asked questions steadily for an hour on end, and even then were far from being satisfied, for though Hope smiled and declared that she had had "a lovely time," they were vaguely conscious of the difference which she herself felt only too surely. Hitherto home had meant the centre of interest, and its walls had practically bounded the world; now her heart was a wanderer, and at every pause in the

conversation roved away to that distant spot where it had found fresh anchorage. Fortunately for the keeping of her secret the girls were enthusiastic on the subject of the children's entertainment, and encouragingly sanguine of success. Theo had finished writing the story, and read it aloud after dinner to an appreciative audience, who unanimously decided that she must give her attention to children's stories forthwith, since nothing more poetically graceful, and at the same time interesting and exciting, could be wished to wile away the children's hour. Hope was humming over the refrain of a chorus, and trying to decide which of two well-known airs would be more suitable, when Madge drew a sheet of paper from a portfolio and held it towards her with conscious pride.



"'YOU ARE NOT YOURSELF,' SAID RALPH, 'SOMETHING IS TROUBLING YOU. HAVE YOU HAD BAD NEWS?'"—(*p.* 795.)

"My share in the Amalgamated Sisters' Enterprise, Limited! I never like to be out of a good thing, so, though I was not asked, I determined to have a finger in the pie. You will want some sort of advertisement to take round to Entertainment Agencies, and to distribute among friends. There you are!"

There Hope was, indeed, for Madge was never more happy than when she could give full play to her fancy. For years past she had amused herself by designing artistic programmes for the many small bazaars and concerts that had taken place at her country home, so that she had experience as well as interest to help her on this occasion. Hope grew quite pink with pleasure and embarrassment as she looked down the sheet and tried to realise that she herself was the performer of whom it spoke.

"TELL ME A STORY!" ran the heading, in quaint, uneven lettering; while immediately underneath came a sketch of two children—a boy and a girl with hands outstretched as though they were offering the petition. Madge had copied the figures from an old sketch, altering only the dress to suit the occasion, and a dainty little pair they made, most eloquent in their dumb entreaty.

Beneath came more lettering, setting forth that Miss Hope Charrington, the Children's Entertainer, was prepared to give her charming recitals at Christmas parties, bazaars, or charity gatherings for the sum of two guineas an hour! A waving, ribbon-like border edged the sheet, held up at the corners by four characters dear to the childish heart—the Prince, the Princess, the Fairy, and the Giant!

"Madge! you darling—how perfectly lo-ovely!" gasped Hope in delight. "So clever—so dainty, so—so beautifully professional! But oh, *dare* I? 'Charming recital!' Suppose it is a terrible failure? 'Children's Entertainer!' I have never entertained any one in my life! Suppose I were to break down!"

"Practice makes perfect! Of course you will have to try your hand. The vicar of St. Giles's called on us yesterday, and asked if we would help in the parish. I asked—just as a feeler—if he would like a treat for the school children, and he snatched at the idea. You are to let him know what you can do, and if you run the blockade of his street arabs you need fear no longer. *They* won't pretend to be amused if they are not, that is certain!"

"It will be pleasant for me if they hoot in the middle! but I'll put my feelings in my pocket, and do my very best. I must do *something* with my life, and I am determined that nervousness shan't stand in my way," and Hope sighed once more—the short, stabbing little sigh that had come so often since her return.

When the sisters retired to bed that evening Theo chatted pleasantly about ordinary matters until the gas was put out, then she stretched out an arm, and asked in a tenderer tone than was often heard from her lips—

"What is it, dearie? What is the trouble? Can you tell me?"

"Oh, Theo, how did you know?" cried poor Hope, guiltily. "I thought I had hidden it so well."

And then out it came—the poor little love-story, that was hardly a love-story at all, but only a "might have been"; the happiness of those few days, the awakening, the bitter wrench of parting. The soft voice trembled as it came to the end of the story, and a little sob was swallowed with the last words: "He was hurt! I could see he was hurt. There was a sort of strained look on his face as he stood looking after the train. Oh, Theo, do you think I did right? Do you think I have made a mistake?"

Theo's arm pressed tenderly against the heaving shoulder. "I think," she said quietly, "I think you did what seemed to you best at the time, and what was very hard to do, and that having done it, you must not regret. When you have chosen the narrow way, dear, you must not look back."

"No!" said Hope faintly, "but still . . . I can't . . . help . . . regretting! It is cowardly, Theo, but he was so . . . I liked him so very much. Do you think it is all over . . . that I shall never see him again?"

"He can see you at his sister's next month if he wishes to. Try to put him out of your mind until then. Work hard, and let off steam to me when you feel particularly blue. This new plan is going to be a success, I feel convinced of it!"

Theo was too prudent to give more definite comfort, but, when by herself, she laughed scornfully at the idea that a solitary refusal would discourage a true lover. If this Mr. Merrilies had been simply attracted by a pretty face, and was likely to forget the fancy as quickly as it was formed, why then the less Hope thought of him the better, but the artless narrative had given Theo a different impression of his feelings. Dear, modest Hope had no idea of her own winsome charm. But her sister felt it impossible that a man of taste could live in the same house, learn the unselfish sweetness of her disposition, share in her light-hearted gaiety, and watch the different emotions flit over her face as she sang, and still call his heart his own. "If he is a thousand times all she thinks him, he is not good enough for Hope!" she told herself proudly. "But oh, what a comfort it would be if she married happily, and had no need to fight for her bread. She is too sensitive to bear the 'heart-breaking' that is my apprenticeship."

The slow tears rose in Theo's eyes and trickled on to the pillow. The "worrying story" had been returned for the third time. It was looking quite dog-eared and shabby!

CHAPTER XV.

THE next morning Hope and Theo seated themselves at the piano, and tried over the songs which were to be included in the musical recital. The words had been written to fit certain tunes, but on singing them over little hitches and awkwardnesses were discovered, which made it necessary to re-construct certain lines or introduce a new word for an old. As Philippa sat darning stockings in the dining-room she smiled to herself at the sound of the disconnected snatches of song and the monotonous repetition of airs which were in such strange contrast to the classical music in which Hope delighted. All the same, the refrains

were certainly very catching; and when the "Giant's Song" was practised in its turn, Philippa found herself instinctively swelling the chorus, emphasising the last words of the lines in merry, school-girl fashion.

"Whether he be alive, or whether he be DEAD . .
I'll have his BONES to make my BREAD! . . . "

At lunch-time author and composer made their appearance, rather blue as to complexion and red as to finger tips (for the luxury of a fire in the drawing-room could not be indulged in before three o'clock at the earliest) but jubilantly pleased with themselves, and with the improvements which they had accomplished.

The next thing on the programme was to have a number of circulars lithographed for distribution, and for this Hope proposed to arrange that very afternoon, Madge accompanying her, the better to give instructions. "I can pay for them out of uncle's present," she explained smilingly. "He drove down to the Lodge with me, and slipped a note in my bag, in his usual, fussy, disconnected fashion. 'Something to pay for your fare, my dear, just to pay for your fare! Serious thing to live upon capital! . . . Mustn't allow you to be out of pocket by visiting us!' I thought it would be a couple of sovereigns just to cover expenses, and forgot to open the envelope until just now when I was getting tidy for lunch and wanted something out of the bag. Then I came across it, and what do you think I found? . . . A ten-pound note! Wasn't it sweet of the dear little mannikin?"

"Very decent. Fancy your forgetting about it! I should have torn it open the moment his back was turned," cried Madge in amazement, and Hope sighed at the remembrance of how her thoughts had been occupied. It was a relief to be up and doing, and she started off with Madge on the expedition directly after lunch. Theo turned out also in search of adventure, while the busy housekeeper toiled away at her basket of mending, building castles in the air about that happy time when her fledgelings would be full-grown geniuses, and poverty and anxiety known no more.

Three o'clock struck, and almost at the same moment came the sound of the electric bell to startle Philippa in the midst of her dreams. In response to the summons the little maid went to the door, and a man's voice inquired if Miss Charrington were at home. Philippa, gasping in dismay, offered up a mental prayer that Mary would remember to show the visitor into the drawing-room, but Mary on her part had no intention of doing anything of the kind. Of experience she had none, but her sense of fitness told her that when a gentleman wished to see the Missus he should be shown into her presence as speedily as possible. She opened the door of the dining-room for about the space of six inches, peered round the corner, announced "Here's a gentleman!" and promptly retired to her lair, leaving the stranger standing on the mat. Philippa groaned in spirit over her own negligence, vowed that not another day should elapse before Mary was instructed in the art of introducing visitors, and walked forward to discover the identity of the stranger.

Alas! the first glance brought a prevision of trouble, for she saw before her the stooping form, the thin, cadaverous face of the "Hermit," occupant of No. 9. He bowed; she bowed, invited him into the room by a wave of the hand, and stood before him in questioning silence. Seen close at hand the Hermit was younger and less austere than he had appeared from a distance; his features, though emaciated, were delicately moulded, and the eyes that looked out of the hollow caverns were bright and alert with life. It was the face of a man whose body was the slave of his brain; a man who forgot his meals in the interest of work; who turned day into night and persistently ignored physical ills. He was a striking contrast to the girl beside him, with her glowing cheeks and tall, well-developed figure.

"You wished to see me?" asked Philippa, to end the silence. The Hermit coughed nervously, and turning his hat to and fro, flicked the dust from the brim.

"I—er, yes! I came to the conclusion that a personal interview was necessary. I have tried —er— other means of protest, but, as you are aware, without success. The case in point is—er— briefly this, that I cannot any longer submit to the annoyance which I have suffered since you have taken possession of this flat, and by which my work is seriously interrupted. The ordinary noises of a household I must, of course, put up with, but that is a different thing from wilful, intentional disturbance!"

"Wilful! Intentional!" Philippa's cheeks grew rosy-red, and she squared her shoulders in her old determined fashion. All the danger signals were flying, and if any members of the family had been present, they would have given little indeed for the chances of the stranger in the battle which loomed ahead. "I think you can hardly mean to insult me by insinuating that we have deliberately tried to annoy a neighbour, however wanting in courtesy we may have found

him! I presume the immediate reason of this complaint was the music this morning; but I may remind you that for the last ten days the piano has not even been opened, as my sister was from home. Does it not strike you as somewhat unreasonable to complain if a neighbour plays the piano once in a fortnight?"

"I was not aware that the interval had been so long, but even so, there ought to be moderation in all things. People who live in these establishments ought to remember that however gratifying to their own tastes it may be to sing comic songs for hours at a stretch"—the thin lips curved into a barely-concealed sneer—"it may be a most painful penance for their neighbours."

"Even so, I am afraid it was necessary in this case. My sisters were not practising for their own amusement; strange to say, they also were at work! It is not necessary to go into details, but I can assure you that what they were doing was as important to them as your studies are to yourself. You misjudged them altogether if you supposed they were performing for your edification."

"I am sorry if I have made a mistake, though, of course, this was only one occasion out of many. As a matter of fact, I did not intend to speak of music primarily—but of the other noises which are more difficult to explain: a constant tapping outside my study window, for instance, which has a most trying effect on the nerves, and has made connected thought impossible every evening during the last week; and an extraordinary jarring sound which wakes me out of sleep before it is light, so that not only is my day's work marred, but my nights disturbed into the bargain!"

Philippa rested her hands on the table and stared at him with distended eyes. Was the man mad? Was he one of those morbid creatures who develop hallucinations in their lonely hours, and who, having once become possessed of an idea, proceed to nurse and coddle it into a full-grown mania? She tried to keep calm and cool, but her voice vibrated with indignation.

"And do you seriously mean to tell me that you believe *us* to be responsible! Do you blame *us* because something has gone wrong with your window-frame, or because the noises in the street disturb you in the morning! They disturb me, too. I can rarely sleep after five o'clock, but I have certainly never dreamt of blaming you for the fact. You cannot possibly mean that you think——"

"I do more than think. I am as sure as it is possible to be! It is no ordinary street noise which wakens me, but something much nearer, and more jarring. It appears to be immediately outside my window, and it happens once each morning, and only once—sometimes at five, sometimes later, sometimes earlier still. With regard to the tapping, it has never happened before, and so far as I am aware nothing is wrong with my window. I believe, as I said before, that both these noises are the result of intention, not accident!"

Philippa looked at him steadily with her bright, dark eyes.

"And suppose," she said quietly, "suppose I tell you in return that you are entirely mistaken, and that we have nothing to do with either one or the other. What then? Will you refuse to believe me?"

The two stared at one another in silence, like combatants measuring strength for a fight. It was the man whose eyes were the first to fall; the man who first showed signs of relenting.

"Of course, if you give me your word, Miss Charrington, I am bound to take it."

"Then I give you my word, Mr. Neil, that we are absolutely innocent of annoying you in the way you describe."

The Hermit bowed, laid his hat on the table, and fumbled nervously with his coat.

"I can only say that the matter is most mysterious and annoying. Perhaps, however, you will be willing to promise that in other respects you will be more considerate for the future, so that I may be able to work with less disturbance from the noise overhead?"

"I am afraid I cannot see my way to giving any such promise, for I fail to see how we *can* be quieter without interfering with our own duties. I have three sisters, and music is the profession by which one of them hopes to make a living. If she gave up practising it would seriously injure her prospects. The others are busy all day long, and naturally wish for a little relaxation at night. Although you give us no credit for consideration, I may tell you that we are constantly calling our young brother to order in case he should disturb you, but I should not feel it right to make home dull and cheerless by forbidding any noise whatever."

"It does not occur to you that under those circumstances you are hardly the right tenants for a flat, but ought to be in a house of your own?"

"It occurs to me that we are the best judges of our own actions," returned Philippa icily, fighting down the wild longing that arose, even as she spoke, for a place of their own—a nest, however small, where they might dwell in peace and freedom! "You are not the only tenant, Mr. Neil, who has to endure disagreeables from his neighbours; we also might find ground for

complaint, if we wished to be disagreeable. My sisters sleep above your study, and they say you keep poking the fire until two in the morning and waking them up with a start. Then, too, you have a hanging lamp or chandelier which you push up, and which makes a most unpleasant noise; and in the autumn evenings you smoked strong cigars on your balcony until we were poisoned with the smell! Oh, there are a thousand things which I could mention," cried Philippa, though in truth she would have been puzzled to add one more complaint to her list, "but I would not stoop to it! It is too miserably petty and degrading to be everlastingly picking quarrels. I am sick of it!"

"Not more heartily than I am. I have lived in these buildings for nearly ten years and have only once before made a complaint, when, I may remark, it was met in a very different spirit!" The Hermit was evidently growing ruffled in his turn, and could not resist a parting shot before he left the room. "As I said before, I should be sorry to have to complain to headquarters, but I do not intend to have my comfort ruined by newcomers who have no claim on the establishment. If it becomes impossible for us both to live under one roof, I have little doubt who would be asked to remain!"

He was gone. The door closed behind him, and Philippa sank into a chair with a sudden feeling of collapse. "Oh! oh!" she cried, and her hands went up to her head, and her breath grew short and strangled. All her pride and independence were swept aside by the remembrance of those last pregnant words: "Impossible for us both . . . little doubt in whose favour Suppose, oh, suppose, the Hermit complained the Committee, and she was served with a notic to quit! Suppose, with one set of bills bare settled, she was called upon to incur a second With characteristic Charrington impetuosity sh beheld ruin stalk towards her, and the faces brothers and sisters filled with a pale reproac Her head dropped forward on to the table, th tears rolled down her cheeks. She was just abou to indulge in the luxury of a good cry, whe suddenly, there was a sound in the room, a

"'MAY I—WILL YOU ALLOW ME TO COME TO SEE YOU SOMETIMES?' RALPH ASKED OF HOPE."—(*p.* 796).

exclamation of distress, and there stood the Hermit, picking up the hat which still lay on the table, and murmuring disconnected sentences of explanation.

"I forgot my hat. The door was still open! I forgot to shut it. I turned back—Crying! I hope that I . . . that nothing that I have said . . . I should be most distressed ——"

Philippa stared at him helplessly. Her impulse was to deny the suggestion with scorn, but how was that possible with the tears rolling down her cheeks? She tried to control herself, to steady her voice sufficiently to reply, but the floodgates were open and could not be restrained. An agony of dread seized her lest she should humiliate herself still further, and, pointing to the door with childlike helplessness, she sobbed out a pitiful "Please go! Please go!" and buried her face in her hands.

The Hermit crept back to his room but he could not work. Between himself and his books rose the vision of a girl's face, tremulous and tearful. The dark eyes looked into his with pathetic reproach. He called himself a brute and a coward for having dared to distress her!

CHAPTER XVI.

ACTING on the rule of all good housewives, Philippa breathed no word of the unpleasant incident of the afternoon until dinner was over, and the workers had been fed and rested after their day's labours. Steve, it is true, noted the pucker on her brow, and questioned her dumbly across the table, but she frowned a warning, and eagerly questioned the girls as to the success of their expedition. The circulars were promised in a week's time, and, pending their arrival, Hope had called on the vicar on the way home, and arranged to give her first performance to the members of the infant class on the following Monday. She had confided to him her anxiety to rehearse her entertainment, and he had laughingly promised to find her occupation for as many nights as she liked to give, either in his own parish or in those neighbouring ones which were even more in need of help.

"So you will gain experience and do good at the same time; a most agreeable arrangement," said Philippa smiling. "The next thing is to buy yourself a really smart frock out of the remainder of Uncle Loftus's tip, that you may be ready for the social engagements when they come. You have nothing suitable, and in this case it is a duty to be provided with the prettiest and most becoming gown you can find."

"That's the sort of duty I should like! I could be a martyr to it if it came to me in that guise!" said Madge with a sigh. "No mortal knows how it harrows my artistic soul to wear ugly clothes. I sometimes feel inclined to kneel down and do obeisance before the dresses in the Bond Street shops. And they look so lovely just now! I've had a horrible temptation sometimes to ask for things to be sent on approval, just for the pleasure of trying them on, and seeing how I look in them."

"Do you think it is an honourable thing to send for things that you have no earthly intention of buying?" asked Philippa the literal—with a solemn air which delighted her mischievous sister.

"No, I don't; I think it's a mean trick, but I'm so dull. . . . I want to do something reckless for a change! You needn't alarm yourself, Philippa; if I wrote asking for a selection of Court dresses to be sent on approval to an address off the Tottenham Court Road they wouldn't pay much attention to the order I'm afraid!"

Theo thought not, indeed, while Hope looked pained and penitent, and said, "I seem to have all the changes—all the good things! I suppose I ought to dress for the part, but remember the 'Amalgamated Sisters!' Whatever I gain must be divided in equal shares."

"If you want excitement, it is a pity you weren't at home this afternoon, Madge!" said Philippa. Dinner was over by this time, and she felt herself free to unburden her mind and receive the longed-for sympathy. "I had an adventure all to myself and found it more exciting than I liked. The Hermit called, and Mary showed him in, in her own original fashion, that is to say, left him standing on the mat. He came to lodge some more complaints, and we had a royal row. I think he is mad, for he made the most extraordinary statements . . . but he is worse than mad—he is dangerous, and means to complain and get us turned out if he can. There is not the slightest ground for his complaints, but he is an old tenant and we are new, and it is only natural that his word should be taken before ours."

"Don't worry yourself about that, old girl," said Steve, kindly; "I have not the slightest fear of being turned out. Neighbours in flats are constantly having these little frictions, and the authorities must turn a deaf ear to complaints if they wish to succeed, or have any peace in their lives. I'll go down some night and talk to the old fellow quietly, and see if I can't bring him to reason. We have been so quiet, too, since Hope went away. What on earth did he find to grumble about?"

"Oh, my dear, the wildest fancies! He didn't

like Hope practising the children's songs this morning, and was blightingly superior about her taste, but the worst grievance is that there is a tapping at his study window which gets on his nerves, and that something wakes him up every morning before it is light! It sounds too ridiculous to be true, but he actually supposed that we were responsible."

"What utter folly!" began Steve angrily, but the next moment he stopped short, and with one accord four pairs of eyes followed his towards the corner of the room where Barney sat—shaking, red-faced, apoplectic. "*Barney!*" cried the head of the house in a terrible voice. "What is the meaning of this? Do you mean to say that this is *your* doing? Have you had any hand in this business? Speak up this moment!"

"I should think I had!" cried Barney. "Both hands in it. . . Didn't I vow, when Hope went away, that I would find some plan of keeping the old fellow occupied? I flatter myself that I hit on something original this time, and secured a fine effect, with next to no trouble. The tapping was made by a little lead weight, hung on the end of a string fastened outside the girls' window. It swung about in the air, just at the top of his panes, and when there was a breeze, tapped away like a machine. I fastened that up one day, and left it to do its work. It's there still, if you choose to look. The waking-up business was more difficult. I found out, by watching the lights at night, that he slept beneath my room, and I borrowed an alarum from a fellow in the office. I told him why I wanted it, and he nearly died with laughing. I set it for different hours, and lowered it down by a cord, so that it lay against the pane; I left my window open, and when it went off it woke me too, and I hopped out of bed and pulled it up before he opened his window. It was too dark for him to see anything, but I could hear him muttering to himself, in a tearing rage. It came off splendidly, but I'm not sorry to give up that part of the business, for it was jolly cold getting out of bed and standing by that open window. It isn't good enough in this weather!" and Barney doubled himself up in another burst of laughter at the success of his plot.

"PHILIPPA AND THE 'HERMIT' STARED AT ONE ANOTHER IN SILENCE, LIKE COMBATANTS MEASURING STRENGTH FOR A FIGHT."—(*p.* 800).

For once nobody joined in the chorus: the girls were dumb and horrified, while Stephen was filled with righteous indignation.

"Stop laughing this moment, sir," he cried sternly. "You have done mischief enough—don't make it worse by triumphing over it. If you have not enough consideration for your sisters to teach you how to behave, I must find some way of keep-

ing you in order. I won't have the peace of the house ruined and Philippa worried to death."

"Leave him to me, please Steve!" said Philippa quietly. She walked forward until she stood immediately before Barney, and the smile faded from the boy's lips as he saw her face. She was not flushed as he had often seen her under the stress of passing irritation, but white, deadly white, with a look in her eyes before which his own fell to the ground.

"You have made me tell a lie," she said slowly. "Do you hear? I gave Mr. Neil my word that we had had no part in these annoyances. He did not want to believe me, but I made him. I gave him my word. I will not wait a minute before going to him and apologising for saying what was not true. Get up! Come downstairs with me! You shall tell him the whole story as you have told it to us, and you shall ask his pardon like a gentleman. Are you coming?"

Barney scowled and looked at her darkly; he opened his lips to say that he would do nothing of the kind, but Philippa looked at him again and the words died away. She walked to the door, and he marched after her; she held it open, and he passed through. They stood together before the Hermit's door, and Philippa pressed her fingers on the bell.

CHAPTER XVII.

HALF an hour passed by, fraught with the deepest suspense and anxiety to the waiting party in No. 10, then Philippa's step was heard running up the stairs, and in she came, white no longer, but smiling, rosy, abeam with complacency. "Where is Barney?" cried four voices eagerly, and she seated herself before the fire, crossed her hands on her lap, and regarded her audience with the prospective satisfaction of one who knows that she is about to make a sensation.

"Barney," she said slowly, "is enjoying himself so much that he refused to come away! He is invited to stay for the evening. He is at present employed in helping Mr. Neil to catalogue specimens for his microscope!"

"Wh—at?" gasped Steve incredulously, while Theo caught hold of her sister by the shoulders and gave her an impatient shake. "Phil, be sensible! Tell it properly! Begin at the moment when you knocked at the door, and go right through to the end. Now then. Begin!"

"We—ll!" drawled Philippa, comfortably. 'I rang, and a boy came to the door—I don't think there is a woman on the premises. Mr. Neil heard our voices and came out to see what was wanted. He took us into his room, all books and litter, and a great big miscroscope on a stand by the window. Don't ask me what I said, for I don't know. I only remember his face looking so startled and sorry. He is really very nice-looking, you know, and he wears a velvet coat! Barney behaved well. He said, 'I'm sorry, sir, if I have annoyed you. It was only a joke!' and Mr. Neil said, 'All right, my boy, that is settled. We won't say anything more about it. Are you interested in microscopes?' After that we went over to the stand, and he explained what he was doing and showed us the workings. It was very exciting! Barney was in raptures, and I was quite horrified to find how long we had stayed. He was as nice and kind as he could be, and I believe it is the beginning of peace. Oh my dears, such dust! I longed for a brush and shovel. No wonder he looks ill, living alone in that dreary place, with only a boy to attend to him. I believe he is starved!"

"He is a real good sort anyway to behave so well to that boy. I'll call on him some night, and perhaps we can return his kindness by asking him here occasionally. I am glad peace is settled, but I am not done with Mr. Barney yet. He must promise me to give up these foolish tricks," said Steve, severely. He himself had never played a trick in his life, and could not imagine wherein the fun lay!

When Barney came upstairs an hour later he was taken into the dining-room and lectured in solemn, elder-brotherly fashion, and being in the highest of spirits, obediently promised all that was desired.

"I shan't want to rag him any more, because, you see, we shall be pals!" he explained. "He wants me to go down whenever I feel inclined, and that will be pretty often, because, though the girls are bricks, a man does like another man to talk to sometimes. He's terrifically clever! You should see all the things he has made himself—little mechanical businesses, you know, that you can't buy. He is going to let me watch him when he is at work. I fancy he felt a bit bad when Phil ate humble pie, and wants to make up by being extra amiable and friendly!"

It was just as well that the Hermit had been conciliated, for in the days which followed, Hope was constantly practising her songs, and reciting her story to an imaginary audience in the drawing-room. Mary sweeping the tiny hall, would open her eyes in amazement as a voice cried dramatically: "Fairy Godmother! Fairy Godmother! can you not help me now? I'm so

lonely up here in this deserted tower. Is the spell not broken yet, dear Godmother?" And the fairy answered, "Patience, Princess Chrystal! Wait but a few hours longer. To-morrow morn, as the sun creeps round the corner of the poplar tree, look out of your casement window, and you will see. . ." Mary was all agape to know what the Princess Chrystal would see, but Philippa came bustling out of the dining-room, and half laughing, half frowning, sent her about her work. Later on a message-boy, who was waiting for an answer to a note, grew quite pale with agitation, as an unseen giant hissed out, "To your knees, rash youth! Before another hour is past, you shall be chained in the lowest dungeon beneath the castle moat!" It was really quite alarming, and the message-boy informed his companions who were waiting for him in the road, that there was a lunatic upstairs, who was raging, and carrying on 'something krool'!"

"HOPE'S CIRCULARS WERE PROMISED IN A WEEK'S TIME."—(*p.* 802.)

The first performance was a nervous occasion, and Hope realised the full difficulty of the task which she had undertaken when she stood upon the platform of the mission-room, vainly trying to gain a hearing from a crowd of noisy, excited children. Appeal was useless, but at length the happy idea struck her to begin with a song, so down she sat to the piano, struck up a lively air, and gave the first verse with such spirit and go, that at the word "Chorus!" there was quite a creditable attempt at the refrain. After that it was comparatively easy to keep the attention which she had gained, although she had rarely before experienced such tiring work. For a first attempt the performance was a distinct success, aye, more than a success, for it proved the existence of many weak spots, demanded more prominence for dramatic incidents, and proved that, given time and experience, she need not fear the most critical juvenile audience.

Twice more did Hope give a performance of the fairy-play before the long-delayed circulars were ready, and she started forth on the difficult work of distribution, with Madge as companion, guide, and administrator of much-needed courage. Any girl who has tried to earn her own living will have discovered how different becomes the demeanour of those in authority when the supposed customer turns out to be himself in need of help. It is a painful revelation, and the moral which it teaches us is, to be gracious to other poor suppliants if it ever comes to our turn to be in authority. Madge had made a list of those Entertainment Bureaus where tickets can be obtained for theatres and concerts, and arrangements made for drawing-room entertainments, but when the first of these establishments was reached Hope made three successive bolts past the door before she could be induced to enter. Her embarassment was greatly increased by the fact that several other people were in the shop, ready to listen, and to stare with curious eyes as she mumbled her request. The assistant ran his eye carelessly over the leaflet—Madge's masterpiece, printed regardless of expense on thick rough paper with torn edges—did not think there was any demand for that sort of thing, was afraid it was not in their line—No! did not object to keeping the advertisement. Would put it on the stand if there was room, and before the girls had turned aside, flicked it carelessly into a drawer.

Hope was trembling, crimson of cheek, and

inclined to turn tail and make a short cut for home, but Madge's chin was in the air, and her face set in determined lines.

"Snob!" she cried scornfully. "Working himself, and despising others because they try to do the same! Dear Hope, don't look so doleful? You surely don't mean to let yourself be discouraged by a worm like that!"

"Oh, it is so hateful!" murmured poor Hope tremulously. "Suppose they *all* treat us in the same way! You know very well Madge that that circular will never see the light!"

"Oh, won't it, though! It shall be up on that board before a week is over!" returned Madge, obstinately, and when breathlessly questioned how and why, answered imperturbably—"Haven't the slightest idea, but I'll find out a way! Cheer up now, and for goodness' sake don't look as if you were ashamed of yourself. I'd send you home and go the round myself if we could exchange faces for the occasion, but if you will only perk up, you can do far better than I. Look smiling and self-possessed, and as if you were rather conferring than asking a favour!"

It was admirable advice, but alas! Hope was not the girl to carry it into effect. Her cheeks would flush, her voice would shake, she looked so unmistakably the amateur, that in spite of her charming appearance she met with but scant success wherever she went. No one actually refused her circular, but the manner of its acceptance was so lukewarm and careless that it would have depressed the stoutest heart. Even Madge looked downcast when home was reached, but she was smiling again by dinner-time, and what was more, Philippa and Theo were smiling too, with a mischievous enjoyment, which seemed strangely unsympathetic to the crushed adventurer.

For several days no explanation was forthcoming, then came an afternoon when housekeeper and author arrayed themselves in all the splendour they possessed, and sallied forth on a mysterious errand. Hope wondered, questioned, and was amiably snubbed for her pains, but at five o'clock back came two flushed, triumphant conspirators, only too eager to tell the tale of their adventures.

"We have been working for you, my dear!" cried Phil, nodding cheery encouragements at the dear, pretty sister, who had grown to look so pathetically pale and wistful of late, "but the idea came from Madge, so you have to thank her, most of all. Well—we sallied forth, and went the round of the shops where you had left your circulars. Theo took one direction, I took another, and we met at the Stores. The first shop I went into was empty, and I had quite a long talk with the man. I wanted to know what entertainment he could provide for a juvenile party? He suggested a Magic Lantern, Cinematograph, Punch and Judy, Conjuror . . . I looked profoundly bored, and drawled out, 'So terribly commonplace. . . Have you nothing NEW!' He declared there was nothing else, and I was feeling very baffled and angry, when suddenly he remembered your circular, and began searching for it in a drawer. I regarded it with judicious calm, thought the terms rather high, but on the whole was rather taken with the idea. The difficulty, of course, was to withdraw without settling anything definitely, but some other people came in, and I murmured polite nothings about 'thinking it over,' and beat a retreat. At the next place my pumping failed, for the wretch had forgotten all about you, or had thrown your circular into the fire. You must send him another with a polite reminder of his promise to find you engagements 'subject, of course, to the usual commission!' Number three had actually pinned you up on the board, beside the Performing Brothers and the Negro Troupe. He ought to have been an author, for he had a beautiful imagination! When I inquired about you he waxed quite enthusiastic about your abilities and popularity! I regarded him more in joy than anger, and hoped he embroidered as eloquently to all his customers!"

"Oh! Oh!" cried Hope, aghast. She was torn in twain between elation and pangs of conscience. "How sweet of you, Phil, but—do you think it is quite right?"

"Why not? Does not every unknown author implore his friends to ask for his books at their libraries, and express untold surprise because they are unknown? Why should not we advertise you, in your turn?"

"You must be boomed, my dear, or you may wait for ever for an engagement! I was even more bold than Phil," confessed Theo, "for I purposely hung about until other people went into the shop, and then spoke in such a loud voice that they were obliged to hear what I said! They seemed quite interested, and I left one lady reading the circular and asking questions about you. In another shop I said, in an anxious voice, 'I hope she will be able to come to me when I want her! Will it be necessary to engage her a long time ahead?' The man looked as solemn as an owl, and said, 'Yes, madam, it would be wise. There is sure to be a rush in the Christmas holidays!' What do you think of that? Won't it be exciting when the letters come in?"

There was no doubt about that, but unfortunately no letters arrived, and the weeks passed by, and the Christmas holidays began, and not a mother in the whole metropolis expressed the slightest desire to engage the services of the Childrens' Charming Entertainer! Hope's wistful look each time that the postman's knock came to the door moved her sisters to fresh efforts on her behalf, and an ingeniously-worded inquiry was despatched for publication in the pages of a popular fashion magazine:—

"Can any lady recommend a new form of entertainment for a children's party? No Lanterns, Conjurors, or Marionettes. Early answer much appreciated."

An early answer was in fact in readiness from the hour when the inquiry was posted, and therein Theo was prepared to certify, that having heard Miss Hope Charrington's Entertainment (at the Mission Room of St. Paul's Church!), she was able most enthusiastically to recommend it to all mothers and guardians. Alas! the all-important inquiry was one of many more "unavoidably delayed through want of space!" and how to reply to an advertisement which had never appeared, was a problem which baffled even Madge's ingenuity!

"I shall go to see Minnie Caldecott this afternoon!" said Hope one Tuesday morning when the post had produced nothing more inspiring than a couple of circulars and a coal bill. "I can't sit here any longer doing nothing, and it is evidently no use writing to her. I

"BARNEY AND PHILIPPA STOOD TOGETHER AT THE 'HERMIT'S' DOOR, AND PHILIPPA PRESSED HER FINGERS ON THE BELL."—(*p.* 804.)

have not even heard if the song arrived! Would any one like to come with me, and get a peep into professional life. Theo?"

"Yes," said the author, quickly. "It will be 'copy,' and I want it badly. I have quite a stock of heroes and heroines on hand, fascinating creatures, every one, and I can't think what to do with them! Perhaps one might be a public singer. I've given her a lovely voice already. I'll come, Hope, and make a study of the lady while you discuss business!"

A few hours later, therefore, behold the two sisters seated in the warm, flower-scented little room, where the portraits of becurled ladies still smirked from the walls, and the presiding goddess dispensed tea, and kept up a stream of cheerful, inconsequent babble. She appeared overjoyed to see her visitors, kissed them effusively, addressed Hope affectionately as "Miss What's-your-name," and declared that she remembered her quite well. "You brought me a song with ridiculous words, and you have all come up to town to make your fortunes. It isn't too easy, is it? I'm supposed to be one of the lucky ones, but it is the solemn truth, my dears, that there are only a few pounds between myself and the workhouse. It is a hand-to-mouth business, and what with cabs and gloves, there is precious little to be made out of these suburban concerts. I shall have to get married one of these days. There is one man now—that is his portrait on the mantelpiece—the one with the big nose! he has been worrying me for years, and I tell him the first time I get a cold on my chest, I'll marry him then and there. I could never stand the expense of an illness. Look at that girl laughing! It is your sister, isn't it, dear? What is her name? Theo! I say, how toney! Are you clever too, Theo? What is your line?"

"I—write!" replied Theo, shrinking in anticipation of the question which is fraught with so much humiliation to the would-be author. Of course, Miss Caldecott would instantly want to know what she had written, and where it could be found, and then how agonising to be obliged to explain that, with the exception of a few stories in a village paper, not a word of her writing had ever appeared in print! Hope came to the rescue with a reply which was at once tactful and diplomatic, since it turned the conversation into the desired channel.

"I have been keeping her busy lately. She has been writing children's stories for an entertainment which I am hoping to give. I brought one of the advertisements to show you, as I thought you might be interested."

The undisguised yawn with which Miss Caldecott greeted this announcement was the reverse of encouraging, but she read the circular with increasing interest, pronounced the idea to be "rattling good," and wanted to know who was responsible for the design. "I'll have a programme got up like that some day!" she declared, but she yawned again when the girl's expatiated on the skill of their artist-sister, and interrupted with another question:

"Have you written any more songs lately?"

Hope looked at her gravely, and found it impossible to keep a tinge of reproach out of her voice as she replied, "Why, of course! You know I have. I have been waiting for weeks to hear what you thought of the one I wrote especially for you."

"Gracious!" ejaculated Miss Caldecott, "I never got it! I remember now that you did write to me about it, but I get so many letters that I forget half what's in them. I've never seen it anyway! Perhaps it is in that cupboard with the newspapers. That is my bogie hole, and if I haven't time to open things I stick them in there, and forget all about them. You can look if you like, dear. I'm too fat to stoop!"

There was an air of dignified displeasure in the manner in which Hope crossed the room to avail herself of this permission, but Miss Caldecott drank her tea in blissful unconsciousness, and when the MS. was discovered, still wrapped in an unopened covering, she exclaimed cheerily: "Think of that now! It would have lain there till Doomsday if you hadn't come. Do you want me to hear it? Strum it over then, my dear, but I give you notice that I'm full up for this season."

"But—but it was a commission! You *asked* me to write it!" cried Hope, stung into retort by the keenness of her disappointment. "Don't you remember saying you wanted a domestic song about children, to make the mothers cry? You suggested the words yourself, and we carried out your idea."

"I suggested it, did I? How clever of me! I suppose I saw you were disappointed, dear, and wanted to let you down easy. I hate being disagreeable, but I never thought you would take it seriously. Here! let me see it! I can tell in a moment if it is any good."

She rose, and standing by the piano glanced over the pages once or twice, then motioned to Hope to play the accompaniment. The next moment the rich melodious tones filled the room, and Theo held her breath in rapturous enjoyment. What a glorious organ of a voice—how

sweet, how full, how true—what a melting tenderness of expression, what skill in seizing on effective phrases and bringing them delicately into prominence! If her eyes had been shut, what a lovely *spirituelle* vision she would have pictured as the owner of this wonderful voice, but alas! there stood Minnie Caldecott, flushed, fat, and towsled, enveloped in the blue silk tea-gown, which was beginning to show decided signs of age—as far removed from spirituality as it was possible for a human creature to be! She sang the song to its last note, and nodded her head approvingly at its conclusion.

"It is not at all bad, dear. Quite a fetching little song! I could make them howl with that, couldn't I? and it is different from anything I have on hand. I might find room for it sometimes, if we could agree about other things. What was your idea as to terms?"

"Oh thank you, you are too kind, I did not think of charging you at all. It would be an advertisement for me if you sang it, and that would be sufficient payment."

Hope was fully convinced that she was acting in a generous manner, and Theo agreed with this conclusion, so that it came as a shock to both when Miss Caldecott burst into a peal of laughter, and cried loudly: "Bless your innocent heart, I meant what are you going to pay *me!* Didn't you know that we were always paid for taking up a song. That is why we sing such rubbish half the time. I'm a business woman, and can't afford to work for nothing. I'd like to oblige you, dear, and it's a useful little song in its way—I believe I could do something with it, but I must have my commission!"

"Then I am afraid there is no use discussing the subject any longer. I cannot afford to pay anything," said Hope quietly. She had turned very white, but her manner was calm and collected, and she rolled up the song with an air of finality, which showed that she meant what she said. "Perhaps another day, when we are better off—"

"Charmed to see you, dear, at any time, but you'll never get on in the world if you don't pay out a bit at first, or if you *do*, it will be a mighty slow process! You think I'm a wretch no doubt, but I dare say if the truth were known I'm as hard up as you are yourself, and I have no rich friends to help me. You *have*, and you ought to make them useful. Now I'll tell you what I will do for you: you mention my name when you hear of any one giving a reception, and every time you get me an engagement I'll sing your song, and you shall play the accompaniment. That would help us both, and I'll do as much for you if I hear of any children's parties coming off!"

Hope's thanks were very sweetly expressed, but disappointment was still the predominating feeling, and when the sisters found themselves in the street they exchanged a rueful glance under the light of a lamp.

"It seems as if no one wanted us!" sighed Hope, sadly. "Whatever we try to do, there are a thousand people who do it a thousand times better. I wonder if we shall *ever* succeed!"

"As Mr. Hammond said, it depends upon how much heart-breaking we can stand. We never shall if we lose heart before six months are over!" said Theo sturdily. "Cheer up, old girl—those letters will be arriving soon, and then you will be too busy to be depressed!"

Hope sighed, and was silent. The ache at her heart made disappointment harder to bear, and Miss Caldecott's offer of help seemed at present of little value. Aunt Loftus might indeed be willing to engage the services of a professional, but there was no one else of whom such a favour could be asked, and reflection brought an added sense of friendlessness to the tired girl as she walked home through the crowded streets.

It is always the darkest hour before the dawn. So says the proverb, and in this instance it was fully justified, for no sooner had the girls passed the Hermit's door than Philippa and Madge flew to meet them, each waving a letter in her hand, and keeping up a loud excited chatter.

"For you, Hope! At last! Here they come!"

"A coat of arms. Such lovely paper. Beautiful writing!"

"Mine is from one of the Agencies. Application from a client, no doubt. Be quick! Be quick! We are dying to read them."

"Why didn't you open them, then? It is your business as well as mine."

Hope opened the Agency letter first, and shuddered dramatically at the intelligence that a certain Mrs. Annesley would be glad to engage her services for the evening of December the 27th; then came the turn of the second letter, and her sisters saw the pale cheeks deepen into rose as she read its contents.

"It is from a Mrs. Welsby, in Belgrave Square, a sister of the Mr. Merrilies who was at The Shanty. He has told her about me, and she wants me for the 29th. I—I think I shall take a berth on an Atlantic liner, and emigrate. I daren't face it. I shall make an idiot of myself, I know I shall!"

"All right. If you don't go—*I* shall!" cried

Madge. "I can sing too—in a fashion, and that four pounds would be remarkably useful to us just now. Choose between yourself and me—that is the position!"

There was no sympathy forthcoming for Hope's nervousness, on the contrary, she was made to feel that it was her duty to overcome any such feeling, and to do her best for the sake of the family. Happy girl! her chance had come, while others were still waiting their turn; it was they who were in need of pity! not one to whom a longed-for opportunity had been given. Hope listened, assented, and let no further word of dread pass her lips. In truth, after the first shock was over, she forgot everything but one absorbing question—would Ralph be at Mrs. Welsby's party? Would she be able to speak to him? Would his face lighten at the sight of her, as it had done during that happy fortnight at The Shanty? At one moment she longed passionately to meet him, at the next she almost wished him absent, since it would be doubly difficult to be natural and unconstrained under his scrutiny.

(*To be continued.*)

HER CERTAIN DESTINATION: THE TRIALS OF AN ANXIOUS MOTHER.

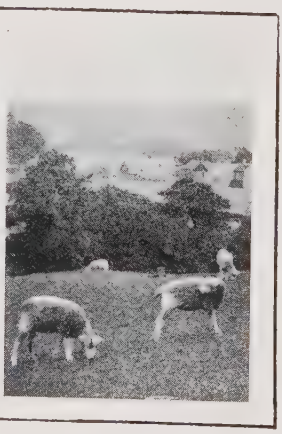
THE MOTHER: Do you know what happens to little girls like you, Betsy, who worry and worry their mothers, until they die from the worry?

BETSY: I don't 'zackly know, Mother, but I am terribly afraid *I* shall be going to Heaven soon; Dolly does give me such a *tremendous* lot of trouble.

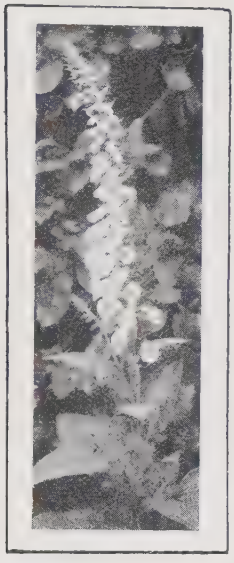
GOOD NIGHT AND GOOD MORNING

A FAIR little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see;
Then smoothed her work, and folded it right,
And said, "Dear work, Good night! Good night!"

SUCH a number of rooks flew over her head,
Crying "caw, caw," on their way to bed;
She said, as she watched their curious flight,
"Little black things, Good night! Good night!"



THE horses neighed, the oxen lowed,
The sheep's "bleat, bleat" came over the road,
All seeming to say, with a quiet delight,
"Good little girl, Good night! Good night!"



SHE did not say to the sun, Good night!
Though she saw him there like a ball of light,
For she knew he had God's own time to keep
All over the world, and never can sleep.

THE tall pink foxglove bowed its head,
The violets curtsied, and went to bed;
And good little Lucy tied up her hair,
And said on her knees her favourite prayer.

AND as on her pillow she softly lay,
She knew nothing more till again it was day,
And all things said to the beautiful sun,
"Good morning! Good morning! our work has begun."

WORDS
BY
LORD HOUGHTON.

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY
GERTRUDE WALLIS

A Girl's Visit to the City of Toys.

By
KATHLEEN
SCHLESINGER.

Illustrated by Photographs specially taken for The Girl's Realm.

Nuremberg has been known for centuries as the City of Toys, the place from which have come many of the dear delights of childhood in palace and cottage.

During the Middle Ages, Nuremberg was a flourishing free city of far-reaching influence, and its artisans enjoyed a world-wide reputation for skilled workmanship, enterprise and inventive genius. These high qualities found expression, amongst other things, in the hundreds of knick-knacks and toys of every description known as *Nürnberger Tand*, which the merchants, issuing forth in stately companies from the castellated gates of the city, bore upon their richly-laden pack-mules to the markets and fairs of Germany, France, Flanders, Hungary, Poland and Italy. The Nurembergers, indeed, were authorised by Royal Charter as early as the 12th century to travel and trade without let or hindrance or paying of tolls throughout the length and breadth of the Empire.

We must not imagine, however, that toy-making in those early days formed a trade of itself; it was carried on by silversmiths, carpenters, tailors, founders, etc., who either made in miniature for the benefit of the children such articles as they devised for their elders, or such toys as fell within the scope of their handicraft.

Fabulous sums were paid during the Middle Ages for the toys of princely children. Louis XIV. for instance was the happy possessor of a complete army of cardboard soldiers elaborately painted, which was made for him at the cost of about 50,000 francs; later on this was replaced by an entire army cast in solid silver with which the little Dauphin learnt the art of war. These costly toys were preserved for many years, and their ultimate fate was as unexpected as it was pathetic: the King during the troublous times at the end of his long reign was reduced to such straits for money that the little silver army had to be melted down in order to provide real soldiers for France.

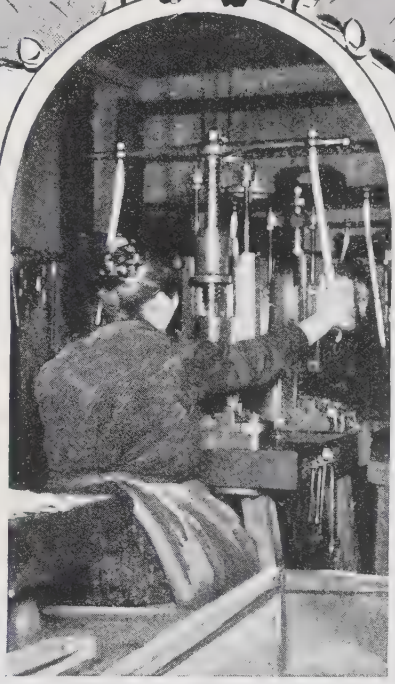
All toys were, fortunately, not luxurious, and we find that in the 16th century cheap dolls were made of a composition of clay, paper and plaster. At that time already the wooden, jointed dolls of the kind known as *Dutch* dolls were a speciality of Nuremberg no less than were others of better quality.

Our own revered Queen Victoria was very partial to these wooden dolls, of which she had a collection of over a hundred, each with a number pinned on to the dress and duly entered by name in a little memorandum book under the title of "List of my Dolls" The little Princess, with the conscientiousness which characterised her from her earliest years, found it necessary to state by whom each had been dressed, lest she should be credited with the industry and skill due to another. These dolls were not in themselves very beautiful to look at, with their angular limbs, their sharp noses and dabs of red paint on each cheek, but she loved them, and to her they were all living personages.

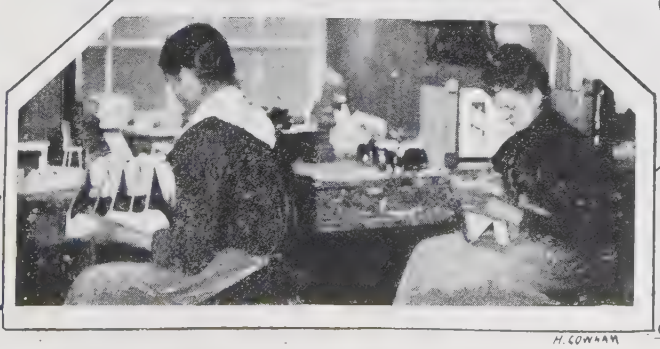
Dutch dolls are now things of the past, and Nuremberg has almost given up making dolls of any kind, although it is still a great emporium for toys of every description.

Two illustrations are of the finest toy-shop in Nuremberg, that of Wahnschaffe, in Josephsplatz. The photographs were taken in early December, and a large Christmas Tree stood on the centre

I.—WOMEN CUTTING UP BATCHES OF TIN SOLDIERS.



II.—WOMEN PUNCHING OUT RAILWAY SLEEPERS FOR TOY TRAINS.



III.—WOMEN PAINTING TOY FURNITURE.

H. CONHAM

counter; all day long the showrooms were crowded with the deputies of Santa Claus, or the *Weihnachtsmann*, as the German children call him, who came to buy toys for the little ones to find on Christmas Eve, arranged on little tables, each covered with a white cloth round the *Christbaum*.

We must now take a glimpse at the Nuremberg of to-day and see how the toys, which we find stamped "Made in Bavaria," are manufactured. The three most important industries now are dolls' houses, stables and shops; the mechanical toys, trains, race-games, etc.; and the tin soldiers.

We will wend our way at once to the oldest and most picturesque part of the town, on the Sebaldus side of the river Pegnitz. Here, on the side of the hill, in the Brunnengässchen, the massive oak door at No. 14 stood ajar. I rang a bell, and at the head of an oak staircase blackened with age, winding and low, stood a figure in the gloom inviting me to step up into the counting-house to see Herrn Christian Hacker, a builder of dolls' houses, stables and shops, in whose work all English girls who have at any time loved their dolls will feel interested. Through the courtesy of his son

A WORKMAN BUSY FITTING THE PARTS OF A DOLL'S HOUSE TOGETHER.

I was enabled to watch the growth of many dolls' homes and to take a few photographs for THE GIRL'S REALM. The rooms were all low, with raftered ceilings, the house itself was the residence of one of the patrician families of Nuremberg more than five hundred years ago.

In the machinery room, where the wood is sawn into proper lengths and cut ready for building the thousands of miniature dwellings which are exported every year to England and America, we only remained a short time, for the noise was deafening. We passed on to where

A LARGE DOLL'S HOUSE NEARING COMPLETION.

IN THE PAINTING ROOM OF A GREAT TOY FACTORY.

the pieces were being fitted together. A smile lit up the face of the grave-looking old workman shown in our illustration when he found that I wished to include him in the picture.

At a bench to his left, small fittings such as

doors, staircases, chimney pieces, were growing under the deft fingers of a lad; another turned out stacks of chairs, tables, dressers and other furniture for the houses. At the other end of the same workshop is a large dolls' house in the course of erection, and a woman putting in the fixtures of a grocer's shop with her glue brush. There are fifty employed altogether in Herr Hacker's factory, which is a thoroughly typical one, and a third of these workers are women.

A WOMAN WORKER LACQUERING TOYS.

In the painting room, the women were working, putting in a white ground and a pale blue border, which they drew without a hand-rest with never a wavering or ragged edge. Before the photograph given here could be taken, a barricade of smoothly planed shops waiting for their coats of paint had to be cleared; there were many such in the workshop, dividing it into lanes, where the women sat at work.

After thus seeing all the various processes, I enjoyed a visit to the store-room, where the finished toys are kept pending exportation. The dolls' houses are of two distinct styles, English and German, and I was so charmed with two of the former that I brought away their pictures for my girl readers. Mr. Hacker, who has spent many years in London, had these made in exact fac-simile of two houses in Clissold Park and at Balham. They are beautifully finished off in every detail; the window sashes are made to lift, the gates and doors to open, the bells to ring; inside is a winding staircase on to which the doors of the rooms open.

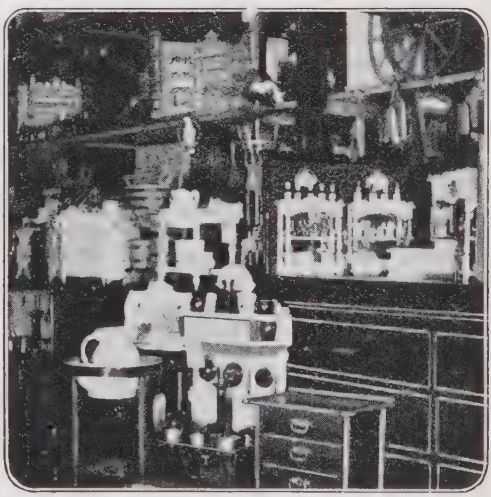
Herr Bub's manufactory of mechanical toys lies beyond the gates in the Gostenhofer Hauptstrasse; here everything is modern and brand-new. From this factory the toy trains, that are the delight of every child, are sent forth in thousands every year; wherever you turn stacks of rails, baskets full of signal boxes, stations, trucks and engines block the way.

On the ground floor are the foundry and machine rooms for casting and fashioning all the pieces needed for the different models turned out each season, and the packing-rooms. Above are the workshops where the pieces are soldered together, fitted and trimmed. In one room a number of women spend their lives punching out of sheets of tin the various pieces needed for the rails of toy trains; the work is not hard, once the machines are set in motion but its monotony is terrible.

TWO DOLL'S HOUSES, MADE IN GERMANY, THAT ARE EXACT FAC-SIMILES OF HOUSES AT CLISSOLD PARK AND BALHAM.

In the painting and varnishing workshops

there were some thirty women and two or three men at work; on all the tables stood pots of bright red, green, blue, yellow lacquer; piles of gleaming tin toys were everywhere at hand waiting to be painted; trains, engines, race games, velocipedes, etc., while at the side of each was a tray full of toys already lacquered, and which as soon as they were dry passed on to other hands to be decorated with transfer pictures. Peace and content were in the very atmosphere, which had that aromatic perfume of burning ceiling-wax which makes lacquering so much pleasanter and healthier work than painting. The room was long, wide and well lighted, but, alas, much overheated, a necessary evil in order to ensure the paint drying rapidly. The women, however, grow rapidly inured to the high-temperature.



WHERE SANTA CLAUS COMES TO BUY.
A glimpse into Wahnschaffe's, the finest toy shop in Nuremberg.

Tin soldiers issue forth in vast armies of every nation under the sun from the workshops of Nuremberg. Most of them come from Herr Rupprecht's factory, a modern building of moderate proportions, situated at Fürth, a small town outside Nuremberg. Herr Rupprecht employs 180 hands in making tin soldiers, 100 of whom work in their own homes. They are the painters who invest the troops with their uniforms of paint according to patterns supplied. This work is usually undertaken by mothers whose families are too young to be left, by cripples and by others whose time is already partly occupied. From four to twenty shillings a week can be earned in this way. The fully-equipped soldiers are brought to the factory in large open baskets, layer upon layer, between sheets of blotting-paper. The toy warriors are then counted, entered upon the register, and passed into the packing-rooms, in each of which some four or five girls, half buried in fine paper shavings, lay them out in brightly-coloured boxes. These boxes then receive their distinctive labels, and go forth into the world to charm and delight boys and girls of all nations.

The actual making of soldiers takes place in a large workshop fitted with several small furnaces round each of which sit three or four women. In the left hand, often bandaged on account of the blisters produced by the great heat, they hold tightly clasped the two halves of the mould or matrix for three or five soldiers; dipping a long-handled spoon into the molten mixture of tin and lead, they pour it carefully through the narrow aperture, shake off the superfluous fluid, then, seizing a knife, open the matrix and dexterously extract the soldiers joined together by a trail. They toss these aside and start afresh. Ten thousand soldiers of all ranks, besides tents, rifles, guns, etc., are thus turned out day by day.

Trays full of these soldiers are passed on to the women at the further end of the room at a long table, two or three of whom spend their lives cutting the soldiers apart with their scissors. Others, so deft and quick that it was quite bewildering to watch them, trim off with a sharp knife all the tiny rims left by the mould round the heads, arms and hands of the little men, and bend the arms into a proper position for holding the rifle, the bugle or the ensign.

Under the Greenwood Tree.

Being an Adventure of Robin Hood and His Merry Men.

By "PATCH."
Author of "How De Wet was Captured."
Illustrated by Tom Browne.

Robin Hood leant his bow carefully against a tree trunk and blew three loud, shrill blasts on his sixpenny bugle. The sound echoed through the leafy greenwood and startled several blackbirds who were holding a noisy meeting in the old oak tree. They chirped back an indignant reply, but this was not the answer that Robin Hood expected. He raised his bugle to his lips and blew three more blasts, louder and shriller than the preceding ones.

"What makes them such a beastly long time," he muttered angrily as he took up his bow and prepared to depart. Just as he was turning away, however, a crashing and rustling of the undergrowth and the murmured sound of voices broke on his ear. Coming events cast their shadows before, and the crashing, rustling and murmuring only heralded the entrance of the rest of the band.

They were clad in Lincoln green, and each one carried a quiver of arrows on his back and a strong bow in his hand. At the sight of their chief they came bounding merrily along. Little John in front, Friar Tuck a few paces behind, and Alan-a-Dale, bringing up the rear with her sun-bonnet hanging by the strings as usual.

"Why didn't you come at once?" asked Robin Hood, sternly, while the panting band stood at attention round him.

"We came as fast as we could," said Little John, sulkily. "How on earth were we to know you were here? I've been hunting for you all over the place."

"Yes. And I've had to fag along with this," said Friar Tuck, pointing to a large mat which had seriously impeded his progress.

"What do you want the woolly mat for? We aren't playing Indians."

"It isn't a woolly mat, you owl. It is a red deer, which I slew in yon glade. We will have venison pie for supper," said Friar Tuck, stroking the woollen surface tenderly.

"I'd sooner have apples," muttered Little John, who was practical and found make-believe eating very unsatisfactory.

"Well, I called you here to give my orders," said Robin Hood, returning to business. "We will separate here and go our different ways. The sun is still high in the heavens, and at the usual time we will meet at the trysting place and tell our adventures. Buck up now and don't be all day. We must all choose different paths, and I bag Goblin's Drive."

"Oh! I wanted that. Well, I'll take Skull Grotto, anyway."

"Oh, bother! You two always sneak the best. I suppose I must have Leafy Lane."

That only left the Avenue for little Alan-a-Dale, and she sighed wearily as she saw the others disappearing down their different paths. Alan-a-Dale was far too well trained to dare to dispute any of Robin Hood's orders; but it was rather hard, she reflected, that because she was the youngest she always had the last choice. Who could expect any adventures to happen when they had to walk along a stupid Avenue! She knew just how it would be. When they met at dinner Robin Hood would have wonderful tales to relate, and Friar Tuck would have performed prodigies of valour, and Little John would have replenished the larder, while she would have to sit and listen, and wish with all her heart that she might be twelve or eleven, or even ten, instead of only eight.

Robin Hood always had wonderful adventures. To be sure he generally chose the adventurous path, where he had to go past the gnarled tree which they all knew was really the Sheriff, their deadliest enemy. Then he had to cross the tree over the stream, and he was always meeting people (in imagination) and having trials of strength. One glorious afternoon he had come into camp covered with flour, which he had dredged over himself.

That was the day he had such a hard fight with the Miller.

It was rather hard that wonderful things never happened to her, thought little Alan-a-Dale, sadly, as she pushed her way through a thicket. The unkind nettles stung her bare legs, and the twigs flew back in her face and stung her worse than the nettles. This combination of misfortunes was more than Alan-a-Dale could bear, and she broke into a low sob as she pushed her way through the remaining shrubs and emerged on to the main road.

"Hello! What's the matter?" cried a cheerful voice.

Alan-a-Dale looked up, considerably startled. It was not often anyone invaded the wood, and the child was ashamed to be seen crying. So she looked up and she looked down, and felt very much inclined to run away from the gentleman who stood looking at her so kindly.

"Why, you poor little thing, what stings you have! Why ever don't you wear stockings instead of those ridiculous socks?" cried the stranger, kneeling down on the turf and applying some cool dock leaves to the sunburnt little legs. "There, that's better now, isn't it? And you have scratched your face as well! You *have* been in the wars and no mistake. Don't cry any more, there's a good girl. Tell me what your name is and what is the matter."

The voice was very kind, and the dock leaves were very cool, and the sympathy was very sweet; Alan-a-Dale's shyness fell from her, while she gave the stranger an account of all her troubles.

"I want to have adventures like the others." she confessed plaintively.

"You see we play games, the boys and I; and sometimes we play at Robinson Crusoe, and sometimes at Indians, but mostly we play at Robin Hood, and this is Sherwood Forest you know; at least it isn't really, but we pretend it is. And our home is Nottingham; not really you know, but pretending. And Robin Hood he's twelve, and he is always having wonderful adventures, and once he had a real fight and had a big bump on his head. And Little John he is eleven, and Friar Tuck he is ten, and me, I'm eight, and nothing ever happens to me. I only have to sing the ballads and fetch the things that everyone has forgotten, and—and Oh, I do so want to do something as well. Meeting you is a sort of adventure if only I could think of someone for you to be. Let's see. You can't be the Sheriff, 'cause Robin Hood is sure to want him. But—Oh I know. Would you, *would* you mind being the Abbot? Oh please, please do be the Abbot." And Alan-a-Dale caught hold of his hand in entreaty.

Of course the stranger would be the Abbot. He would have been a crocodile or anything you liked, if in so doing he could have dried the tears on Alan-a-Dale's rosy cheeks.

"But How, When and Where?" he asked, as he straightened out the crushed sun-bonnet and tied the strings carefully under her chin.

"Come now. Come at once. I'm sure the others will be at the trysting place before us.

Oh, do please come quickly." And Alan-a-Dale tugging impatiently at his coat, prepared to dive once more through the sea of nettles and thorn bushes.

"Not that way," said the stranger, whom we must now call the Abbot. "I don't mean to let you get scratched again. We'll go by a roundabout way, and I'll carry you, and then we shall get over the ground quicker."

* * *

Meanwhile Robin Hood and his merry men had pursued their different ways, and met once more under the greenwood tree. It was a surprise not to find Alan-a-Dale patiently watching for them as usual, but they agreed to wait for her a few minutes before beginning their usual revelry. Their patience was not put to a severe test, for it was not long before an excitable little figure burst upon them, crying: "Guess what I've got! Oh, guess what I've got!"

"Some grub?"

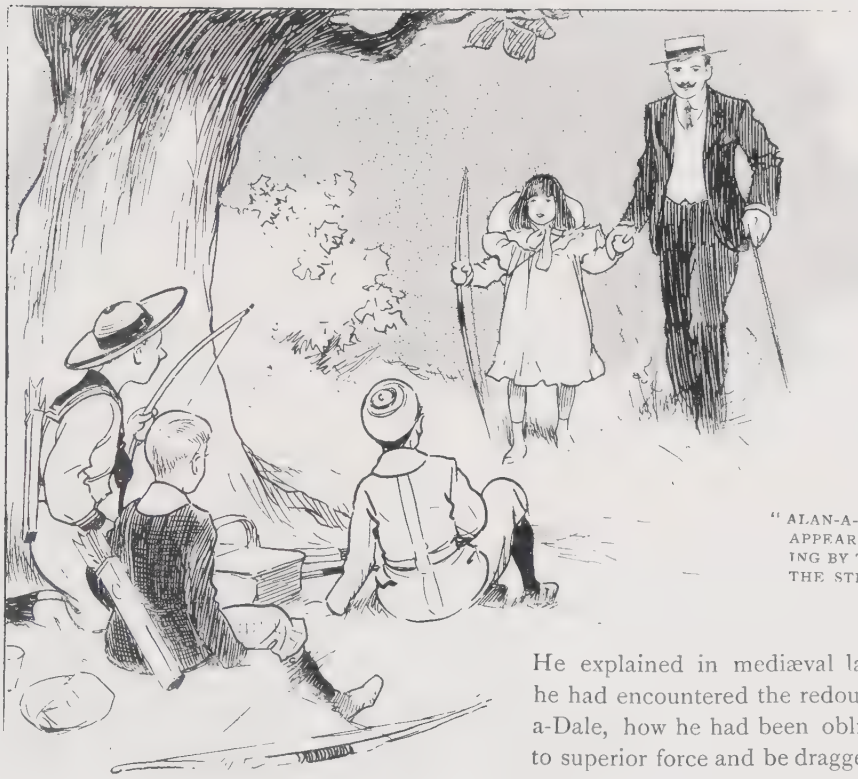
"A Frog?"

"A Toad?"

"No. The Abbot!"

The others stared at her with amazement. It was the first time that Alan-a-Dale had ever caught anything except a scolding, and they did not quite understand what she meant. Before they could question her, Alan-a-Dale danced away as excitedly as she came and reappeared, leading by the hand the stranger, at the sight of whom the boys turned very red and felt very sheepish.

But the stranger soon put them at their ease.



"ALAN-A-DALE REAPPEARED LEADING BY THE HAND THE STRANGER."

He explained in mediæval language how he had encountered the redoubtable Alan-a-Dale, how he had been obliged to yield to superior force and be dragged a prisoner to the king of the greenwood; and he looked inquiringly at the three boys, wondering in his mind which of them owned that title.

Robin Hood stepped forward pulling his bugle more prominently into view. "I am Robin Hood," he said proudly. "Though I have other names as well. To some I am known as Locksley; but my real title is Earl of Huntingdon. Here in the greenwood I am King, and these"—with a sweep of his hand—"are my willing subjects. This is Little John. Not a bad sort when you know him, but rather a rough diamond. (I heard Mother say that,

so it is bound to be true.) This is Friar Tuck; he is all right when he isn't playing the ass. Alan-a-Dale you know already. Now, my merry men, let's fall to on the grub. We don't starve our prisoners, Sir Abbot. Share and share alike is the rule of the greenwood."

After this introduction, and the unflattering remarks thrown at Robin Hood by his merry men, they all stretched themselves on the green sward and began to do justice to a very miscellaneous collection. Whatever else the merry men could not do, they could certainly "fall to" when eating was in question, and the plates were cleared with marvellous rapidity.

In addition to the imaginary venison pasty they had, thanks to Robin Hood, a haunch of—er—ham bone, a small bowl of gooseberry fool, some bread and cheese, and a deliciously sticky concoction called "sugger buttie."

These good things were washed down by copious draughts of sack and mead, which tasted very like water.

"Have some lemon kali, won't you?" said Robin Hood hospitably, at the same time shovelling a large quantity of the powder into his mead and thereby changing it to sack. "You can get heaps of it for a halfpenny, and a present thrown in as well. Don't you really want any? Never mind, you can have some good red wine from your own cellar."

When the more solid portion of the meal had ended, Robin Hood offered to relate his adventures; and the others settled themselves to listen.

"I went through the forest without mishap" he began, "meeting no one save an honest knave, who told me that the Sheriff was having high jinks at Nottingham this week. 'Marry,' thought I, ''twill be rare sport to join in the fun and have my share of the grub.' So I went to Nottingham and mixed with the throng. Then I followed one of the Sheriff's men-at-arms up a steep staircase till I came to a room in which was laid out a goodly spread. Methought 'twould be a ripping rag to crib some of the goodly spread, so I filled a basket and let it down out of the window by a trusty cord. The basket was suspended over the moat, and I was just preparing to descend when an armed giant appeared and tried to stab me in the back, the low beast! I caught him by the neck and swung him far out of the window into the moat below, where he fell with a mighty splash. Then I turned round and beheld a second giant leaning against the wall, laughing scornfully. Now, I had lost my good broadsword in the fight and so was completely at the mercy of this churl. 'Never say die, Robin Hood,' said I, and I made for his ugly face in the proper English style. He parried the blows, and was just going to finish me off with the butt-end of a spear, when I gave him one on the nose which made him lean heavily against the wall. He raised his club above his head, his eyes blazed with fury, and I thought my last hour had come, when suddenly a secret spring in the wall shot back and the varlet fell into a deep and noisome dungeon. The door banged to with a snap and I swarmed down the rope, took the basket in my teeth and swam to the drawbridge and made for the greenwood and—and that is all."

We are told that cowards die many times before their death. According to that adage Robin Hood was the bravest man that ever lived, for he did not die even when he clearly ought to have done so. He bore a charmed life. Time after time he had been victorious against fearful odds. He had been shot at with poisoned arrows; thrust with spears and pikes; hanged with hempen rope; and yet he always escaped to tell the tale.

When this stirring recital was ended, and had been applauded, it was Little John's turn to speak. Little John, as I said before, was practical, and had but little imagination.

"As soon as I got home," he began.

"You mean to Nottingham?" interrupted Friar Tuck.

"Yes. As soon as I got to Nottingham, mother sent me upstairs to wash my hands, 'cause she said I was a disgrace to the family. And when I came downstairs she sent me up to wash them again. And then when I came down I heard Uncle Jim say, 'I want some one to do a little errand for me.' So I hooked it through the kitchen garden, and I sneaked these because I thought they would do grandly for dessert." And Little John held up a big bunch of carrots in triumph.

Friar Tuck's story was rather more blood-thirsty.

"As I was wending my way through yon glade" ("yon" was a favourite word with the Friar) "I saw a stout varlet eating apples. 'Give me those apples,' quoth I, very politely. 'That will I not' quoth he. 'Then we will see which is the better man,' quoth I, and therewith I brought down my stout staff a sounding thump on his surly pate. He didn't see much fun in that, and he got rather raggy. He made for me in an awful bate, but I parried his blows and gave him one for himself on the skull. Soon the fellow began to roar lustily for mercy; so I took the spoil and went on my way." And Friar Tuck proudly produced the apples, which he had bought at the village shop in the usual uninteresting manner.

When nothing was left of the banquet but the carrot-tops and apple-peel, Robin Hood suggested that the Abbot and he should have a trial of skill. Three arrows were gravely handed to the Abbot, and a willow-wand was planted in the ground for him to shoot at. The Abbot had fallen completely into the spirit of the game; so it is hardly necessary to state that his arrows went very, very wide of the mark.

Then did bold Robin Hood choose him three trusty shafts, winged with the feather of the grey goose, and, drawing his yew bow to the full extent of the shaft, he did send the darts one after the other into the quivering willow-wand.

The willow-wand was really a target fifteen feet in circumference; but it sounds so much better to call it a willow-wand.

"Now I must pay my ransom," said the Abbot, who thought it was time he took his departure. "How much do you rate me at? Will half-a-crown apiece suffice, and would you prefer it in Kruger money or English?"

The boys looked at one another in delight. They had never thought of such a charming finale to the game. However, they felt obliged to refuse the kind offer; but, although they said "Oh, no thanks. We couldn't really," they said it in a tone which to a well-trained ear meant "We should like to," and, after a little more persuasion, they agreed to pocket their scruples and the money at the same time.

This present led to the discovery that the Abbot had only recently returned from South Africa, and that he had seen service there and had had many strange and thrilling experiences. The men in Lincoln green asked many eager questions, for they had a cousin out there. They grew quite communicative about him.

He was a jolly sort of chap, they said. He was awfully keen on cricket and he played for his county, and he was stroke of his boat at college, and he had been promoted for gallantry in South Africa, and the King had given him the D.S.O., and he (the cousin, not the King) was coming to see them soon, and they had

seen his picture in a paper and he was not half bad-looking.

All this and much more did they pour out in a breathless stream, while the branches whispered above their heads, and the foxgloves and harebells peeped forward inquisitively to listen.

A colony of rooks, flying home from afternoon school, interrupted the stories with their noisy "Caw-Caw," and the Abbot sprang up from the grass and gave the order to march.

"We really must go," he said. "It must be long past your tea time, and Mary will be expecting you."

"Mary! Why, do you know Mary?" cried the children in a shrill chorus.

Mary was their eldest sister, the very dearest and best sister that any one could have. She had the kindest face, and the sweetest smile, and the merriest laugh of any one in the world. She listened to all their secrets and she told them hers, but she had never said a word about the Abbot.

"Do you really know Mary?" repeated Little John in surprise.

The Abbot laughed. "I used to know Mary twelve years ago when she was a little girl just like Alan-a-Dale; and she used to wear sun bonnets that wouldn't stay on her head, just in the same way. I guessed who you all were from the likeness, but you evidently don't know me. I am the cousin from South Africa, and I've come to stay with you. I arrived by an earlier train than I intended owing to the stupidity of Bradshaw. Now you know who I am and all about me. I have looked forward to this visit for a long time, though I didn't know what jolly little cousins I had. Now let's off home. Carrots are unsatisfying, and I want to have a good old tuck in as I used to when I was a youngster."

The children were delighted with their newfound relative. Alan-a-Dale and Friar Tuck threw themselves upon him with a squeal of delight, while Robin Hood and Little John capered around.

"Oh, I say, how awfully ripping!" cried the Earl of Huntingdon. "Things couldn't have turned out better if I had invented them myself. And— Oh, I say, I'll tell you what. It seems a pity you should be a beastly Abbot, so let's pretend that you only pretended to be an Abbot, and that you are really King Richard, and that you came home from the Crusades on the sly. You know Richard often used to pay pot visits to England when no one was expecting him; like he did when he was the Black Knight in *Ivanhoe*, you know. It all fits in grandly, just as if I had invented it. Hurray! You shall be the king, and I'll swear fealty because you are a leal man and awfully decent, and I'll swear to obey you and I'll make the others swear too. Of course Mother and the rest will make no end of a fuss of you and do just what you want, so I wish you would begin by commanding that we shall all stay up to supper. I could do with a tuck-in myself. Three cheers for King Richard. Hip! Hip! Hurray!"

While the outlaws were cheering wildly, King Richard stooped and lifted up Alan-a-Dale. She was very tired and weary with her day in the woods and she nestled down cosily in his arms.

"Any way," she said, sleepily, "any way, whether you are our cousin, or the Abbot, or the King, it was *me* who found you."

OUR LONGFELLOW DRAWING.

"THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH," the Frontispiece this Month.

THE Village Blacksmith is one of the most popular of Longfellow's shorter pieces. It presents the picture of a humble life led faithfully, a life of human toil and human endeavour for good. We have all seen the village smithy under the "spreading chestnut tree," and the smith, a mighty man with broad and sinewy arms, wielding his hammer from morn till night. We have heard the anvil ringing under its strokes. The children coming home from school gather round the smithy. They love to see the sparks fly up the chimney and to listen to the blacksmith's tales. From youth till age the blacksmith is at work, rejoicing, striving, hoping. At night he goes to rest, worn out with the day's toil, but sleeps happy at the thought that the day has seen some task begun and ended.

Then there is the blessed Sabbath-break when he lays down his hammer and goes to worship in the House of God. He sits among his boys, and as he hearkens to his daughter's voice singing in the choir, tears fill his eyes, for it is like "hearkening to her mother's voice singing in Paradise."

The little poem tells of a humble life that is noble in all its parts, a life that is a round of duties achieved; of a love faithful unto death; of an enduring faith that presents a picture of zeal; of hope and trust. Longfellow celebrates those noble and obscure existences. The illustration fitly closes the fine series of "Longfellow's People" that began with the picture of "Evangeline," going down the village street on that happy Sunday morning before the tragedy of her days began.

The Longfellow pictures that have appeared are, 1901—"Evangeline" (November); "The Shipbuilder's Daughter" (Christmas); 1902—"Hiawatha" (January); "The Children's Hour" (March); "The Hanging of the Crane" (April); "John Alden and Priscilla" (May).

GIRLS THAT THE COUNTIES ARE PROUD OF

III.—
WARWICKSHIRE.

BY
M. P. WILLCOCKS, B.A.

Photo. D. MacNeille, Stratford-on-Avon.

The best of all views of Anne Hathaway's Cottage at Shottery.

Across the fields from Stratford came William Shakespeare to court the Warwickshire girl.

RIGHT in the heart of "Merry England" lies this most English of all her counties, most English in the close touch it has kept with the nation's history from the earliest times, and most English in its scenery, for it is a land of many an old-world castle and Elizabethan manor-house, a land of park-like sweeps of meadows, where, in summer, the kingly oaks throw long shadows on the grass, and where the willows fringe the slow-moving streams as they did in the days when Will Shakespeare walked over the fields from Stratford to Shottery, to visit the Warwickshire girl who was to be his wife. Take up the history of England almost where you will, and Warwickshire will be found playing a large part in the scene. On almost every page will be told the story of how a Warwickshire girl acted worthily the part set before her. Holy women, martyrs, girl-warriors, artists, players, poets and thinkers: they are all here in the story of the past. And in the present we find girls worthy in all respects to carry on the great traditions.

In the myths that precede history we read of a girl, Phelice, daughter of an Earl of Warwick, whose goodness and purity was such that the young knights of those far-off days wrought many great and noble deeds in her name. It is enshrined in the tale of that Guy of Warwick, who, according to the legend, lived in the time of Alfred the Great, and slew the Dun-cow, which was only one of many credible feats. The story tells how Guy sat in a window of Warwick Castle, bemoaning his love for Phelice, and how his lady told him to "make his valour more glorious than the sun, to let it shine through the world, and she will then crown him with her heart and soul and life." Though we may smile at the strange deeds by which Guy is said to have won the lady, there rings from the long past the echo of a good woman's words.

There were Warwickshire girls, in the past, who knew not only how to inspire others to great deeds, but who themselves laid down their lives for their faith. Mistress Joyce Lewis, wife of the lord of the manor of Mancetter, was sentenced to be burnt, during the Marian persecutions, for holding the Protestant faith. The man who first attempted to deliver the Bishop's writ to her was forced to swallow it, with her husband's dagger at his throat. Mistress Lewis endured twelve months' tedious imprisonment because the Sheriff of the preceding year was unwilling to burn her. Finally, in 1557, she was led to the stake. We are told that by the influence of her friends the fire was "great," and did its work swiftly. "Her countenance was cheerful to the last, and the colour did not leave her cheeks."

The Warwickshire girls of old showed a firm front to the world, and testified, as bravely as the men, to the "mettle of their pasture." In the times of the Civil Wars we find a Puritan dame who, like a true woman, fought to save her husband, and in doing so, kept at bay the great Prince Rupert himself.

Dame Purefoy lived at Caldecote Hall, near the Watling Street road. One Sunday, shortly after the outbreak of war, Colonel Purefoy left Coventry, where he was stationed, to visit his home, little suspecting that Prince Rupert was then in the county. Suddenly the Cavaliers were seen approaching. There were but nine men to defend the house; the Colonel hurriedly hid in the hop garden, and those within the house prepared for a siege, that the enemy might suppose their master to be still within doors. "Good feather beds" were placed at the windows, and Dolly, the cook, was ordered to make a fire and bring the pewter plates to melt down for bullets, while the women loaded the guns. The Cavaliers were about to force the door, when Dame Purefoy, lifting one of the guns, said, "God forgive me," and pulling the trigger, fired, killing one of the officers. It was not until the besiegers had fired the stables that the brave little garrison yielded. The thorough search by the soldiers that followed, revealed nothing, and the Colonel, before next morning, was off in safety to join the Puritan forces.

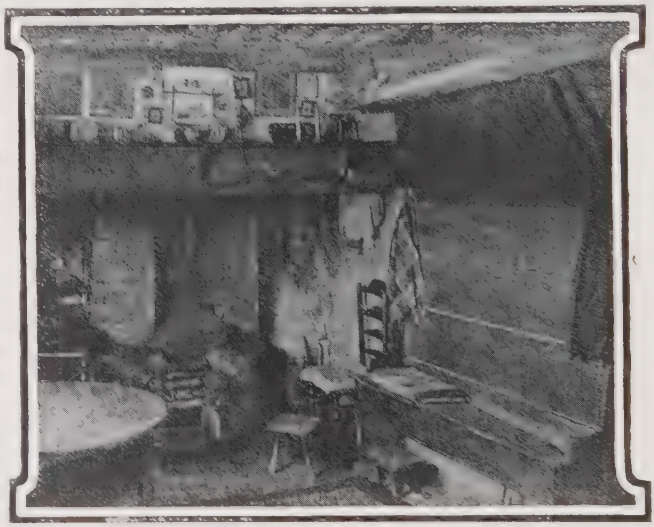


Photo. D. MacNeille, Stratford.

The Interior of Anne Hathaway's Cottage.

We know little of the girlhood of Anne Hathaway, the Warwickshire woman whose happiness it was to become Shakespeare's wife, save that she was the eldest daughter of a substantial yeoman of Shottery. Anne was eight years older than the poet whom she wedded. The house at Shottery, where she lived before her marriage, is now a place of pilgrimage, set, as it is, amid a garden full of old-fashioned English flowers, of "boy's love," and roses in high summertide. Some portions of the furniture of the Hathaway homestead are still preserved, notably the "courting bench," upon which, tradition says, the poet used to sit with Anne, while he wooed her as girl was never wooed before. Anne's life was passed in Warwickshire, for, after her marriage, while her husband went up to London to struggle for a place in the world, she remained in Stratford to bring up her children—Susanna, Hamnet, and beautiful Judith, all three immortalised in William Black's tale "Judith Shakespeare"—amid the scenes where her own childhood had been passed.

Passing down the centuries we come to the names of girls great in art and literature. Here one name in Warwickshire towers above all others, the name of Mary Ann Evans, who, as George Eliot the novelist, lives, and will live, as long as the English language exists, as the creator of human characters who grow more and more real to us the more we study them.

Mary Ann Evans was born in 1819, four years after the battle of Waterloo, right in the centre of rural Warwickshire, at South Farm, near Arbury Hall, the home of the Newdigates, for whom her father acted as land-steward. Six months after the little girl's birth the Evans family removed to Griff House, an old red-brick homestead on the road between Coventry and Nuneaton. This was the child's home for the next twenty-one years, save for the time spent at three boarding-schools, at Attleboro', Nuneaton, and Coventry.

The children spent their days in a dreamy leisure, undisturbed by the rush of express trains and the whistle of the telegraph wires in the wind. Arbury Park was close to Griff House, and Mary Ann often visited the grey old house with her father when he went there on business. Thus she became well acquainted with the house and its stories, its pictures and old-world associations. When, many years later, she began to write stories, she put all these recollections down on paper. In "Mr. Gilfil's Love Story," Arbury Hall, as Cheverel Manor, is described minutely, especially the housekeeper's room, where the white-faced child had so often sat waiting for her father.

What was this wonderful child in herself? She has told something of that in her picture of Maggie Tulliver; her love for her brother Isaac was that of Maggie for Tom, indeed many incidents in the early life of Maggie are those of George Eliot's own childhood. She, like her heroine, ran away to the gipsies in order to instruct them; she, too, used to keep a doll up in the attic of Griff House, that she might hammer nails into it when the world went very much amiss. A passionate little soul she was, longing for more love, more music, more light, more joy, than the actual world gave her; rejoicing when it was possible to get away into the dream-world. Her favourite books were the "Pilgrim's Progress" and Defoe's "History of the Devil," with quaint wood-cuts.

The places she knew live again in her great books as do the people of her childhood. Caleb Garth in "Middlemarch," the man who loved the noise of a workshop above all other sounds, has something of Mr. Evans in him; something, too, Adam Bede himself owes to George Eliot's study of her father. Mrs. Poyser, the witty farmer's wife whose sayings were quoted in the House of Commons soon after the publication of "Adam Bede," is said to have been studied in part from Mrs. Evans, the mother whose delicate health necessitated the sending of Mary Ann to school at the age of five. Here she was the show-pupil, especially in music. At her former school she had been taught composition by Miss Rebecca Franklin, who taught her the value of exact expression, and who seldom, we are told, found much to correct in Mary Ann's work. At sixteen Mary Ann left school and settled down on her father's farm to superintend the butter-making and cheese-churning. In the letters of this period we find her very much depressed and full of morbid self-questioning, discussing the right and wrong of many questions and in the intervals working at Church History and languages. For all that, she could be a merry companion and was especially good at writing-games, such as capping verses and the like.

On the marriage of his son Mr. Evans went with Mary Ann to live just outside Coventry, and here, at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Bray of Coventry, she met a circle of intellectual people, who seem to have recognised her great powers, yet, apparently, never dreamed of the possibility that it would be by novel-writing that she would gain her fame. Here Miss Evan's girlhood passed away. From Coventry she went up

Miss Fanny Davies.
The celebrated pianist who spent her early days in Birmingham.

Miss Ellen Terry.
Who was born at Coventry.

Miss Elizabeth Kirby.
A talented young Warwickshire girl who acted first in Mr. Benson's Company.

The Lady Marjorie Greville.
Daughter of the Countess of Warwick, who is already doing good work.

Photos. by Elliott and Fry, Baker Street; Fellows Wilson, New Bond Street; and Draycott, Leamington.

The Late Miss Constance Naden.

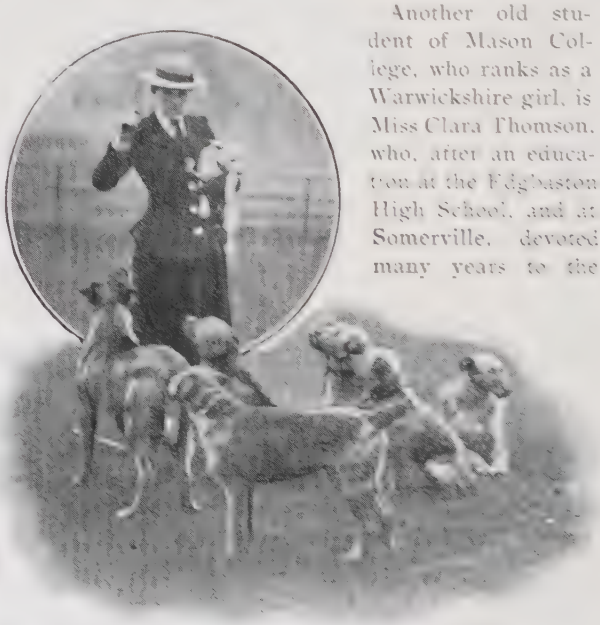
to London, there to start on the writing of those novels in which Warwickshire folk live for all time.

In person Miss Evans seems to have resembled her own creation "Mary Garth": she was small in stature, with very expressive grey eyes, and a profusion of light auburn hair. What most impressed strangers about her was her delightful voice. A desire to do good, and a deep sympathy for suffering, were her principal characteristics. The sorrows of others were so real to her that those scenes in "Adam Bede" wherein is depicted the most poignant of human agony, were written by her in such deep anguish that she was compelled to refuse herself to every one while she was writing them.

Another novelist, Mrs. Gaskell, then Elizabeth Stevenson, the future author of "Cranford," spent a part of her childhood in Warwickshire, at the famous Stratford school kept by the Misses Byerley, the grand-nieces of Wedgwood, the potter. This school was so well known in its day, that it is said the Duchess of Kent considered the advisability of sending the Princess Victoria there. Her stay in Stratford seems to have made a deep impression on the mind of Mrs. Gaskell, for one of her very earliest articles contains an account of a day spent by her and her schoolfellows in wandering over the manor-house of the Cloptons, which contains a ghost-chamber, and other delightful horrors.

Among the literary women of Warwickshire of a later date stands Constance Naden, who in her short life showed powers of mind that led her friends to foretell a future as brilliant as that of George Eliot. Miss Naden, however, died at the early age of thirty-one. She was known at Mason College, Birmingham, as a powerful speaker in the debates of the Union. While still a student there she wrote an Essay on Induction and Deduction, which gained the "Heslop" Gold Medal, the highest prize ever offered to past and present students of the College. She published two volumes of poetry, and one of her first poems—"The Pantheist's Song of Immortality"—Mr. Gladstone described as a singularly beautiful work, while Mr. Bray, the friend of George Eliot, read it as his Sunday morning psalm. Miss Naden died in 1889. A gold medal in her name has been founded at Mason College, and a marble bust of her stands in the College library.

Another old student of Mason College, who ranks as a Warwickshire girl, is Miss Clara Thomson, who, after an education at the Edgbaston High School, and at Somerville, devoted many years to the



Lady Alexandra Danby

study of Richardson. In 1900 she published a new life of the great novelist. In the following year she wrote a life of George Eliot, for the "Westminster Biographies." Miss Thomson is now Examiner in English Literature for the Central Welsh Board, and is engaged in editing many books for school use.

A distinguished student of history is Miss Dormer Harris. Miss Harris, who is a Warwickshire girl born and bred, has painted in her "Life in an Old English Town," a picture of the trades and occupations of Coventry in the Middle Ages. The book met with a very favourable reception.

By courtesy of Messrs. Blackwood & Sons.

George Eliot.

The most famous of Warwickshire's girls

Among girl-warriors of modern time who have perished on the battle-field must be ranked a Warwickshire girl, Miss Mary Timmis, daughter of a Warwickshire minister, who went out to work in China as a medical missionary. Here, on account of the massacres and subsequent war, she was forced to fly to the coast after only a few months' work. She served as a hospital nurse among the sick and wounded until she contracted enteric. The hospital authorities immediately put her on board a homeward-bound vessel, but she became too ill to continue her journey, and she was landed at Ceylon to die.

Among those who have worked to improve the conditions of the poor and downcast, is Miss Joanna Hill, whose work lay chiefly among life's failures —the inmates of prisons and workhouses. Miss Hill, who was the niece of Sir Rowland Hill, the great Post-office reformer, and god-daughter of Joanna Baillie, was an advocate of the system of boarding workhouse children in country cottages. All weak things were assured of her loving sympathy and help.

A society in Birmingham that is doing a great deal to brighten the lives of poor working-women and to make the women of a richer class quicker to understand the needs of humble folk, is the Women's Liberal Unionist Association. Over two thousand women belong to it. The President of the Association is Lady Smith, Birmingham's first Lady Mayoress, a Warwickshire girl, whose good works are endless. These include work in organising District Nursing, High Schools, Women's Settlements and a Needlework Guild, which supplies something like 47,000 garments a year for the poor of the town. Other Warwickshire women who have done much to help homeless and friendless girls in connection with this association are Mrs. Hallewell Rogers and Mrs. Farrow.

Of the great schools of Birmingham, the Edgbaston High School has helped to train many girls now at work in the world. Notable among these are Miss Eva Scott, who, though not born in the town, was educated there. She has since gained fame for herself by the publication of "Rupert, Prince Palatine."

Photo. Marie Weale.

Griff House, where George Eliot's early girlhood was spent.

Several "old girls" of the same school are now at work as philanthropists, chief among them being Miss Lucy Brooks, Guardian of the Poor for a large country district in Cheshire, who was also one of those who helped to start the basket industry for the Connemara peasants.

From the same school came one of the most distinguished women medical students of our time—Dr. Mary Sturge, who gave the inaugural address at the opening of the London School of Medicine for women, and who gained the Prideaux Scholarship for original work.

Amidst all the institutions of Birmingham, none is, perhaps, better known, than its School of Art, and here, too, many women have gained fame, more especially, perhaps, for book illustration. Miss Helen Patterson, now Mrs. William Allingham, who is well known as a painter of delightful water-colours of country scenes, was a student of the Birmingham School of Art. Another, Mrs. Arthur Gaskin, a Warwickshire girl by birth as well as training, is especially known as a designer and an illustrator of children's books; she works also in gesso and makes beautiful jewellery, which she designs herself. Warwickshire girls are, indeed, famous for their artistic gifts, and not only in this generation, for Mary Linwood, born in Birmingham in 1755, founded a famous school of needlework in which numbers of girls of the early nineteenth century received a training in artistic handwork. In 1782 she determined to copy some mezzotints in needlework, and later she began to imitate painting. Her works were exhibited in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin; one piece, the "Judgment of Cain," occupied her ten years, and was not finished till she reached the age of seventy-five.

Miss Evelyn Darlington.

Miss Dormer Harris.

A Warwickshire girl whose future all will follow with interest, is the Lady Marjorie Greville, the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Warwick. Lady Marjorie is, like her mother, interested in a variety of subjects. Just now she is occupied in the study of languages. She has spent several years in France and Germany, and both reads and speaks French and German; in addition to these she is thoroughly conversant with Italian. Her tastes are literary; she contributed regularly some years ago to the spirited little magazine edited by Lady Marjorie Gordon, the daughter of the Countess of Aberdeen, and she was the author of a charming little allegory called "Peu de Chose, Mais Rose," that appeared in the March, 1900, number of THE GIRL'S REALM. Lady Marjorie's life is a very full one. Already she has begun to share the Countess of Warwick's work, and visits regularly the well-known hostel at Reading. Lady Marjorie has inherited her mother's keen enjoyment of all outdoor sports. Like her, she is a capital horsewoman. She is passionately devoted to dumb creatures, and the lot of those animals at Warwick Castle, which include an elephant and a kangaroo, is cast in happy places, thanks to her care and gentle tending of them.

The county of the "Great Player" has produced many women-actors as well as musicians. Mrs. Siddons, though not born in the neighbourhood, at the age of seventeen became companion for a time to Lady Mary Greatheed, at Guy's Cliff. Roger Kemble, with his company, was then playing at Warwick, and he sent his daughter to stay at Guy's Cliff, in order to separate her from Mr.

Siddons, a member of the company, who was paying his court to the girl. The father's plans were, however, frustrated, for next year Sarah Kemble, afterwards the greatest actress of her time, became Mrs. Siddons, at Coventry, where the register of the marriage is shown as a curiosity.

It must be remembered that Coventry is also the town of Lady Godiva. In the 14th-century legend of her famous ride is enshrined the memory of a real Lady Godiva, renowned for her piety and charity, though the act of self-sacrifice immortalised by Tennyson is the invention of after ages. Coventry is besides the birthplace of a famous English actress of to-day, Miss Ellen Terry, two houses claiming the honour of being the place where she first saw the light.

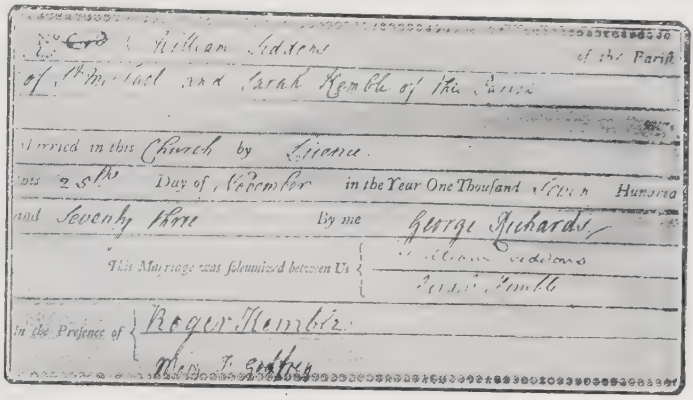


Photo. Maule & Co., Coventry.

A Facsimile of the Register of the Marriage of Sarah Kemble, afterwards the greatest Actress of her time, with Mr. Siddons.

The Marriage was solemnised at Coventry, where Sarah Kemble for a long time resided.

Miss Elisabeth Kirby, another well-known actress of the present day, was born in the town of Warwick, and acted first in Mr. Benson's famous company, where she played "Maria" in "Twelfth Night." She became in time Mr. Penley's leading lady at his new theatre in Great Queen Street, and now acts with Mrs. Patrick Campbell at the Royalty, gaining honour for her native county, both by her grace and talents.

Miss Fanny Davies, the pianist so well-known to English audiences, spent all her early days in Birmingham, and ascribes much of her success to her professors there. Later on she became a pupil of Madame Clara Schumann. Miss Davies is supposed to derive her musical powers from her grandfather, Mr. Woodhill, of Birmingham, who used to play the violoncello with the great Linley.

In the world of sport and athletics, Warwickshire girls, as is fitting in a hunting shire, are well to the fore. Chief among them is Lady Alexandra Danby, a noted huntress from her girlhood, and used to run a drag; her Airedales and foxhounds are well-known in the country.

Hockey is much played in the Midlands, and in the All-England hockey team, Miss Walford, a Warwickshire girl, occupies the responsible position of goal-keeper. In golf, one of the finest players in this part of the country is Miss Evelyn Darlington, who is on the committee of the Ladies' Golf Union.

Miss Mary Timmis,
A native of Warwickshire, who died at her post, nursing the sick and wounded in China.

Miss Eva Scott,
An old Edgbaston High Scholar, who won fame with her book "Rupert, Prince Palatine."

Miss Joanna Hill,
A Warwickshire woman, whose kindly heart found room for all life's failures.

Dr. Mary Sturge,
An old student of Edgbaston School, Birmingham, who has greatly distinguished herself in medicine.

Miss Clara Thomson,
A Warwickshire girl who has found fame with her pen.

HIS FIRST PHOTOGRAPH.

From an original Drawing by F. Y. CORY

A Girl's Adventures on a Motor-Car

By MRS. C. N. WILLIAMSON,

Author of "Dairy's Fairy Godmother," etc.

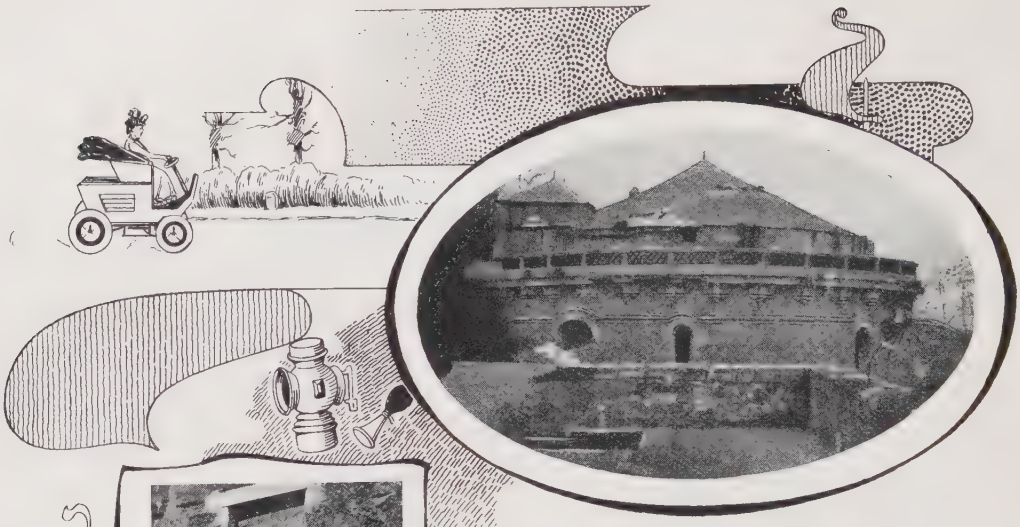
When I was invited to go on a motor-car trip through France, I thought it was the loveliest thing that had ever happened to me in my life.

It *did* sound exciting! There were to be four of us—my friend, who isn't really many years older than I, though she is married; her husband, who was going to drive and manage his car without a mechanic—and a chum of his, whom I had never seen. Peggy (that's my friend), said he was a charming fellow, called "Laddie" by his intimates, though he's Lord—oh! I nearly forgot that I'd made up my mind not to mention real names.

I had never been in a motor-car, and I didn't know what to wear or take, for we were to journey all day and nearly every day for more than a week, until we should reach our journey's end—Biarritz. It was Peggy, quite a motor-car expert after a whole year's experience, who told me what would be necessary.

Our big luggage was to be sent by *grande vitesse*, to Biarritz, where we should find it waiting for us at our hotel, and we were to carry with us on the car as little as possible. Peggy advised that I should wear a short grey tweed skirt and jacket, a fur-lined grey coat up to my ears and down to my toes, and a snug little hood to draw in round my face and keep out wind and dust. And that I should pack into the bag, which would stand with three other bags on a movable platform at the back of the car, one simple frock for dinner at hotels, a dressing-gown, underlinen, toilet things, and a toque to exchange for the hood, when we should go sight-seeing in towns. My friend had given me a fortnight's notice. It seemed as if those fourteen days would never pass; but they did, and at last the morning came when I was to breakfast at Peggy's house in Pont Street, before starting.

I drove to Pont Street in a humble hansom, which was put to shame by the big motor-car that stood waiting at the door. At the same

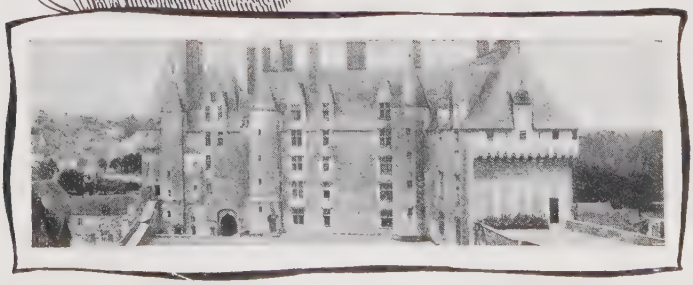


CÆSAR'S TOWER, AMBOISE.

Here is was that Charles VIII., running out to tennis, knocked his head against a low door, and was killed.

ONE OF THE ROCK DWELLINGS OF ROCHE-CORBON.

The lights in the windows set high up in the hill-side seem to be gnomes.



THE CHATEAU OF LANGEAIS.

An old fortified Castle of Louis XI.'s time. Here Anne of Britany was married to Charles VIII

instant as my brother helped me from the cab, a tall, brown-faced, curly-haired young man jumped out of another close by, with a bag in his hand, and we met at the house steps. I was sure this must be "Laddie," and he was equally certain of me and my brother, so we had all begun talking before the man opened the door.

My brother couldn't stop, and we four travelling companions breakfasted alone, and how we did talk! I have always been shy with strangers, but I was much too excited to think about myself, and afterwards "Laddie" and I seemed to know each other so well that it would have been silly to be stiff.

When we first started off in the car, we went with such a rush that I caught my breath and Peggy's hand at the same time. It seemed as if we were going as fast as an express train, but Peggy only laughed and said if this startled me what would I say when we got beyond the traffic and began to drive on "third speed?"

By the time this did happen, however, I was used to the rapid motion of the motor-car; I was no longer afraid, but so exhilarated with the sensation of flying through the air that I begged Jim, Peggy's husband, to go

faster. Our blood tingled in our veins, and it was only when we stopped, because something mysteriously squeaked and needed oil, that we knew what a cold morning it was.

We took nearly all day to drive through sweet, peaceful country to Folkestone; we stopped a long time for lunch, and again for tea, but it didn't matter; we had arranged to cross the Channel at night. To see the car again next morning in Boulogne was like meeting a friend. I was so happy that I could have sung and danced, for I had never been on the Continent, and everything seemed so superlatively interesting that my enthusiasm kept the others laughing. They didn't think much of Boulogne, but I found it charming. We had slept for a few hours at a nice hotel overlooking the quay; and the crowding masts of the ships, the red sails bobbing up and down on the blue water, where the late winter sunrise was showering roseleaves; the fisherwomen with baskets on their heads, and the men in their brown caps and jackets, made a picture for me. Even the *café complet* seemed a most delicious breakfast, and Peggy said that I must really save some of my best adjectives, as we were to drive through the castle-country of the river Loire, the most beautiful part of France, and I should have nothing left but "Oh" and "Ah," if I wasted my expressions so recklessly.

We expected to drive as far as Beauvais that first day, and reach Paris on the next. But we did not start early, because there was a discussion between Jim and Laddie as to whether we should put up with the delay of submitting to some new laws, and apply for "permission to conduct a mechanically propelled vehicle" through France, get a big number to put on the car (which could be illuminated at night) and a lot of other things; or whether we should just "chance it," risking the danger of being asked for papers and arrested when they couldn't be shown, and of being in the end heavily fined. Finally Jim, urged by Laddie, decided to "chance it"; and this gave added zest to our adventure. We had only to avoid running into people, or any accident of that description, and nobody would pay much attention to us, or ask us embarrassing questions.

The poor car (and we who were in it) first got a tremendous bumping over the rough stone pavements in Boulogne; then, as soon as we were outside the town, began going up and down a series of hills, like the largest "switchback" in the world. As soon as we were at the top of one, we whizzed down a second, then were half way up another before we realised we were at the foot of the last one. We sped along through the air, yet there was always time to see how pretty the country was, and how different it was from home—though why it was different it would have been hard to say. The landscape was a little like Devonshire, all loamy, and downy, with purply earth; and yet, if I'd been brought there while I was asleep, the very trees would have told me it wasn't England.

We were nowhere near a town, or even a village, when we began to feel that it was lunch time, and Peggy exclaimed, "this is where our tea basket will come in."

We had been sitting with our feet on that tea basket, but Jim stopped the car at one side of the road near a quaint old farmhouse enclosed in a huge courtyard that had high gates and walls almost like a fortified house. Laddie went and bought milk of the farmer's wife, who came out to look at us; she had a brown face (just like a pincushion doll I once had, with its head made of an American hickory nut) and a white cap tied under her chin. We took her photograph with our Kodaks, and she informed us proudly that her husband was Monsieur le Maire. Peggy and I made coffee, blazing hot; and it seemed that she had bought sandwiches and things in Boulogne.

While we were eating these we saw the most extraordinary procession coming towards us. There were about six gipsy caravans, much more brightly coloured than we see at home, and each was drawn by a tiny donkey. The leading donkey was so afraid of the motor-car that it nearly fell in its traces, whereupon a handsome gipsy held it up, while his wife and *at least* a dozen tiny brown children swarmed out of the caravan. The woman

asked in an odd *patois* if we would like our fortunes told. We said yes, and crossed her palm with silver; but presently I would have given anything if I hadn't, for she prophesied extraordinary things, and looked from me to Laddie, till I was scarlet, and ready to die with shame. Laddie didn't seem much put out; I saw him give her more money afterwards, and say something, too low for us to hear, which made her white teeth gleam like a flash of lightning. I was thankful when we could drive on, after giving all the cakes we had left to the gipsy babies.

My heart was in my mouth a hundred times that first day, on account of the dogs and chickens that seemed determined to die by our hands. Dogs darted in front of the car out of sheer bravado, and just missed being killed by a tip of an ear or a tail; while as for chickens—instead of staying on their own side of the way, where they were quite safe, nothing would suit them but they must run to the *other* side.

We had not started from Boulogne until nearly noon, and when darkness began to close in, we were still a good many miles from Beauvais, in spite of the speed we had made. Jim and Laddie got out to light the huge acetylene lamps, only to find that something had gone wrong with them. They proposed getting on slowly, without lights, but Peggy and I pleaded, and so, when it was quite dark, we persuaded them to stop for the night at a little inn by the wayside.

It was the funniest little inn, and the plainest of the plain, but spotlessly clean throughout. The people could only let us have two bedrooms; Peggy and I had one, and Jim and Laddie the other, and I was in high spirits over our first real adventure.

We dined in a queer room with white sand on the floor, and a pair of tame black rabbits playing about like kittens. Two pretty peasant girls waited on us; and we had eight courses of perfectly delicious things.

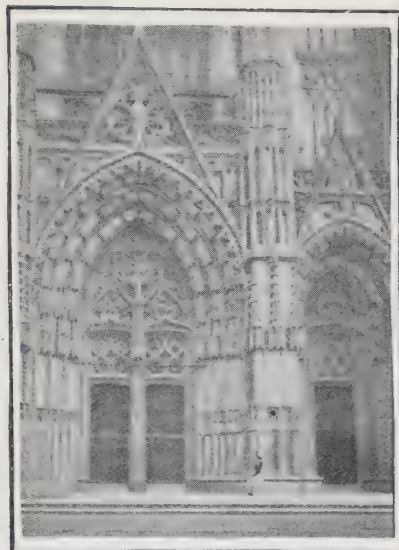
We meant to get off as soon as it was light in the morning, so we went to our rooms early, and Peggy and I had a laugh at our hot water jugs, which weren't much bigger than goblets, and over our one narrow bed, into which we had to climb by aid of a miniature ladder.

In the middle of the night I was waked up by Peggy shaking me. "Don't scream, but I think we're going to be murdered," she whispered. "Just listen!"

I did listen, and sure enough there was a strange noise on the other side of a locked green door, which we had fancied must lead into a wardrobe or cupboard. The sound was of muffled footsteps, and heavy breathing. I was very frightened for a minute, but I wanted to be brave for Peggy's sake, so I jumped up, and lighted the candle. Then I took the key from the other door and tried it in the lock of the mysterious green one, which opened with a squeak, and I peered into the darkness. I *was* surprised when, by the light of the candle in my hand, I saw what was beyond. A ladder like a staircase led down into a stable. It was from this place that the mysterious sounds had come—I could dimly discern in the darkness the forms of Peggy's would-be murderers—a cow, a calf, and a donkey! We did laugh; it was a long time before we could go to sleep again.

Nothing wonderful happened after that until we got to Paris, where we stayed a day and two nights at a beautiful new hotel in the Champs Elysées. We shopped and saw pictures, and went to the theatre; then, early the second morning, we mounted the motor-car, spun through the lovely Bois de Boulogne, out to Versailles, and on the wings of the wind to Orleans, where we were to put up for the night.

I wanted to see every nook and cranny of Orleans, because of the Maid, who is a heroine of mine, but I saw Jim and Peggy, to whom the place is an old story, did not care about stopping there. Laddie must have noticed my face fall, when they proposed setting off at half past nine next morning, for he came to me afterwards. How would I like, he asked, to get up early, and as soon as it was light enough go with him to see a few interesting reminders of Joan of Arc, whom I ought to care for because she was my namesake. Of course I did like, and Laddie and I explored Orleans for nearly two hours before anyone was stirring.

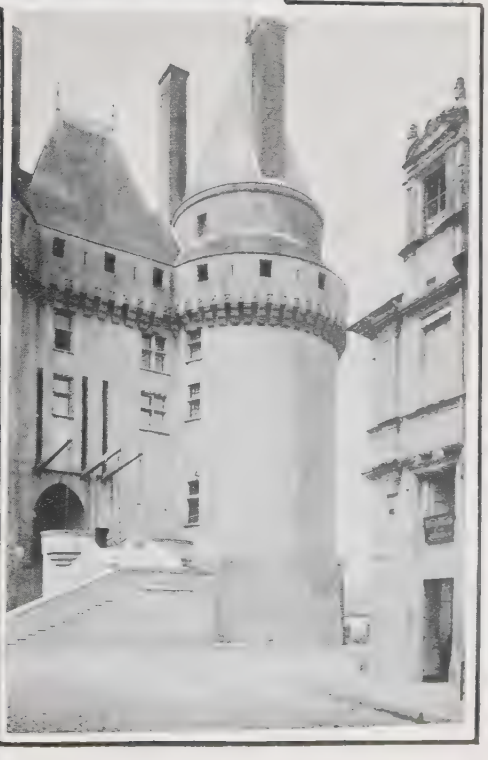


THE BEAUTIFUL CATHEDRAL OF TOURS.

"Now," announced Peggy, when we were off on the car once more, "you must keep your eyes open, Joan, for we are coming to the interesting part of the journey."

And it was interesting. We seemed to be going back centuries. Our swift wheels whirled us over battle-fields

CHATEAU AZAY LE RIDEAU.



H. COWHAM

THE DRAWBRIDGE OF CHÂTEAU DE LANGEAIS

With the house of Rabelais opposite.

where our earliest ancestors had fought and died, and conquered. It was afternoon when Peggy exclaimed "*Voilà*! your first castle." And there, in the distance, I could see a great many fantastic towers and pinnacles rising apparently from the depths of a wood.

"It's the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty," said I.

"No, it isn't," said Peggy soberly. "It is the château of Chambord."

The woods were not thick and old enough for the enchanted forest of the Sleeping Beauty, and somehow, though Francis the First began to build Chambord because he had once loved a beautiful lady who had lived and died in the neighbourhood, it looked wonderfully modern. It is big enough for three kings not on visiting terms to live in without ever seeing each other, and we spent hours in wandering through enormous, gloomy rooms, and on the ramparts. I did not care much for Chambord, because nothing particularly interesting had ever happened there. I had just been reading "Quentin Durward" and "Old Court Life in France," and Henry James's "Little Tour," so that I was freshly steeped in French history, and there were no thrills for me at Chambord.

Our road lay always beside the Loire. The river was a great silver mirror as we flashed by, never stopping until, as the sky was red with sunset, we came in sight of a grey town climbing up a hill, and the long, straight front of a castle with lines of balconies and windows that blazed like jewels. We had come to Blois, and it was a trial to wait until next morning to see the inside of the castle. We consoled ourselves, however, by a visit that evening to a small but famous shop where they make and sell the most charming *faïence* I ever saw. We bought plaques and vases, and hatpins and brooches, ornamented with Anne of Brittany's ermine (a sweet little white beast), and Francis the First's gracefully wriggling salamander.

Early next day (we always did everything early!) we made our bow to the statue of Louis XII. on horseback, over the gate of the castle courtyard, and went in through the great gates. Once inside the castle, we found ourselves suddenly whisked back to the time of wicked Catherine de Medicis. There was her oratory; her study, with secret places in the walls where she used to hide papers of importance and poisons; the balcony where she and her astrologer consulted the stars; the room where she lay dying when the Duke de Guise was murdered by the Forty-five. There, too, was the *Vieux Cabinet*, where the great Balafré was stabbed as he lifted the portière on his way to find the King. Everything had been restored so perfectly that we almost expected to see the people themselves walk out and stare haughtily at us.

Only by assuring me that the château of Amboise was more beautiful still, and quite as full of royal ghosts, and that we *must* reach it by lunch time, could Peggy and the others drag me from the chateau to the car.

Between Blois and Amboise the road became prettier than ever, and the sun was so warm that it did not surprise us to see the vineyards, which told us we were going towards the South.

We passed by the château of Chaumont, looming tall and dark above the river, and thought of Catherine de Medicis again, for she had lived there; but people are so seldom allowed to see the rooms (which are furnished just as they were in her time) that we decided not to stop and try our luck. I was sorry for this, but I grew happy again when from far away we saw the splendid château of Amboise shining like a castle of silver in the bright sun.

We found an inn tucked away in the shadow of the château, and lunched there. Then we climbed the steep hill to the beautiful castle. The view from the ramparts alone was worth coming from England to see; the gargoyles, too, were wonderful; and splendid creeps ran up and down one's spine as one stood on the balcony where Catherine de Medicis made her poor little child daughter-in-law (our Mary Queen of Scots) remain beside her to watch the Huguenots being killed. Afterwards the Huguenots' heads were hung from the balcony railings; and then Queen Mary (not yet eighteen) was allowed to go to the château of Chenonceaux, because so many horrors were

From a snapshot photograph.

THE RAMPARTS OF THE CHÂTEAU OF AMBOISE.

On this balcony Catherine de Medicis made her poor little child daughter-in-law (our Mary Queen of Scots) stand beside her to watch the Huguenots being killed in the streets below.

making her ill. From the castle we went to Cæsar's Tower, to the very top of which we drove in our motor-car, up a winding way inside. There was the oubliette down which people used to be thrown if they happened to do something that made it convenient to be rid of them; and there was the low door against which Charles VIII. knocked his head and killed himself, just as he was running off to play tennis.

I suppose it took Catherine de Medicis and her son and daughter-in-law a whole day or more to reach Chenonceaux; but our motor-car carried us there in about an hour. Such a gem of a château it was, with two storeys, built on a sort of bridge, stretching across the river, and the loveliest golden network of river lights playing through the long corridors, over the water. The garden was exquisite, too; and I didn't wonder that young Queen Mary was happier at Chenonceaux than anywhere else in her sad life.

We had only a short time inside the castle, which is closed to visitors at four, but we wandered in the garden till it was nearly dark. We could have driven on to Loches afterwards, but it was a pity to miss seeing the beautiful country by daylight, so we stopped the night at an inn not far from the castle.

At dawn, we were up and off again. It was lovely to see the sunrise turn the swift waters of the Loire to gold as we drove. Everywhere was something beautiful or interesting—girls washing clothes in the river, laughing and talking as they worked; here, crowning a hill, a beautiful château; there, a ruined tower, or a quaint village. We were almost on the verge of the dark, mysterious forest of Loches, where Louis XI. used to hunt the wild boar, when suddenly a horse drawing a peasant's cart, took it into his head to be annoyed with us for driving a motor-car.

From a snapshot photograph.

A STREET IN THE BEAUTIFUL OLD TOWN OF LOCHES.

Here one sees a new picture at the turning of every street.

We stopped, and Jim silenced the motor, but the horse had kicked a hole in the dashboard, and instantly half a dozen furious French peasants crowded round us, threatening all sorts of things if we did not give them as much money as the whole cart was worth. They jumped in the air, they danced, they shrieked, and Peggy and I grew frightened at their angry faces. But Jim and Laddie only laughed. They flung the men more than enough money to pay for the damage, but not half as much as they demanded, and away we whizzed.

Loches, the grim old fortified castle where Louis the Eleventh had his most terrible dungeons, was wonderful and dreadful. A charming little old woman, who is called "Madame Cesare," took us into secret passages between thick walls, and guided us with a candle into underground cells where prisoners had been hidden for years. On some of the walls the carvings they had made, or words they had traced, centuries ago, were as perfect as if they had been made yesterday.

I should have liked to stop for a week in the beautiful old town of Loches, where one saw a new picture at the turning of every street; but motorists never like to stop long anywhere, I think; they always want to "get on." So we "got on," taking our way to Tours. Jim had just said that in half an hour we would be dining at the nicest hotel in the province of the Loire, when suddenly I cried, "What's that? Are there gnomes in the rocks over there?"

Every one peered through the dusk, where my finger pointed, and then Peggy answered, "Oh, that's Rochecorbon, the little village of rock dwellings. It is as old almost as the rocks themselves; and that queer tall thing like a factory chimney is the Lanterne of Rochecorbon, from which they used to signal all the way to Amboise about five hundred years ago."

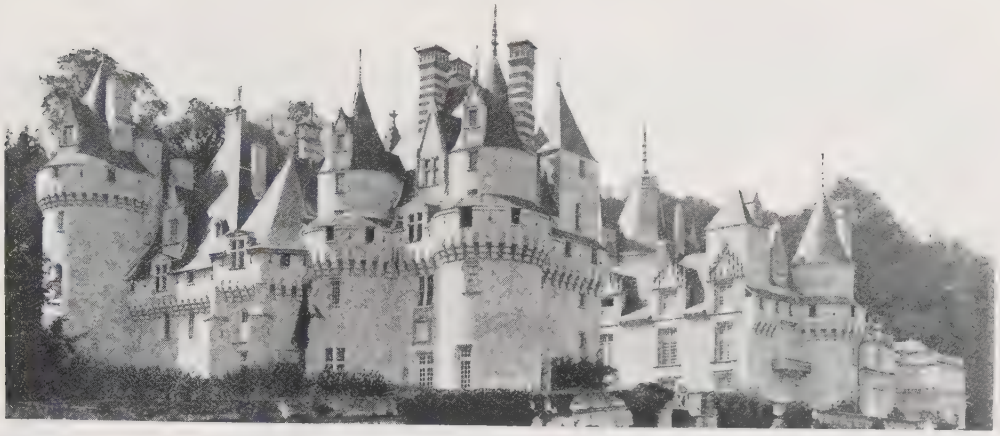
They were literally rock-dwellings, little houses scooped out of the rocks, and the lights I had pointed at in wonder came from their windows, set high up in the hillside. Laddie asked me if I could be happy with "love in (such) a cottage." I was ashamed to say yes; but really it would be lovely to live in one of those rock houses — with somebody one liked.

I don't think any dinner ever tasted so good as that one in the dining-room with the tapestry hangings of the Hotel de l'Univers at Tours. Even the servants seemed angelic, if one could imagine chambermaids and waiters with wings. We were so much in love with everyone and everything that instead of going on next morning, we stopped at Tours four days. We saw the beautiful grey Cathedral, the old, old houses, the Charlemagne Tower, and ate the delicious patés and cakes and bon-bons of Tours. Each day we mounted the car, and started off on an expedition to some famous castle of the neighbourhood; there were so many, with such romantic stories belonging to them, that it was almost like a visit to fairyland.

One day it was the château of Luynes; another day, Ussé; another, beautiful Azay-le-Rideau, which Francis I. built and loved; another, Langeais, which I liked better than anything I had seen, except Loches, or perhaps Blois. A very rich man has bought the old fortified castle (which, like almost everything in this part of the country, is of Louis the Eleventh's time) and put furniture of the period into every room. Although the owner and his family were there, we were allowed to go through the castle, into the biggest drawing-room, where Anne of Brittany was married to Charles the Eighth, and even all the bedrooms and the dining-room. I am afraid that if I had bought an ancient castle and come to live in it, I should not be so public-spirited.

From Tours, we drove to Poitiers in a day—such a quaint old town, huddled at the foot of another castle—then in a day to Angoulême, where Francis the First was born. But I thought more about the story of the witch of Angoulême, which used to frighten me when I was a tiny child, than about Francis I. Angoulême looks just the sort of town to have a witch; I shouldn't wonder if she lives there still.

We went to the theatre at Angoulême, and saw a wild and terrible melodrama, in French, with a villain who had a black moustache one



THE CHÂTEAU OF USSÉ.

One of the most imposing of the famous chateaux of the Loire. Additions were made to the original structure by Vauban, the great architect.

could have tied behind his ears, and an enormously fat heroine who was supposed to be starving rather than marry him. The play lasted till nearly one o'clock; nevertheless, we were up at seven, and spinning towards Bordeaux by nine.

Bordeaux seemed to me like a French Liverpool. I was not at all interested in its fine statues and monuments, which were prosperous and modern. Peggy said I was growing *blasée* already; but it wasn't a bit true, and I was as enthusiastic as ever about some Roman ruins we passed. All I wanted was something old and falling to pieces, as Jim remarked.

Arcachon was scarcely thirty miles away, and after spending a few hours in Bordeaux, we went on to it, though it was nearly dark. The road was level all the way, like a long white ribbon always unrolling itself in front of us, and we drove faster than ever. A few days before I should have been frightened, but now I felt as safe on a motor-car as I would in a donkey-chaise.

I expected to see an ordinary seaside town when we came to Arcachon, but it turned out to be a wonderful place, like no other I ever saw. Just a huge, dark pine forest stretching for miles along the sea-shore—or rather, the shore of the Bassin, for the real sea only growls like a lion far away beyond the bar—and in the forest, a few streets of shops, and crowds of the prettiest, quaintest little toy villas imaginable, to say nothing of some big hotels and a Casino, which might have been stolen from Spain. I never smelt such a delicious perfume as the mingling pine and sea-salt; and I was never more amused than in seeing the young girls and women in funny trousers, gathering oysters—for Arcachon has the largest oyster-beds in the world, and one can buy the oysters for a shilling a hundred. I fell in love with the place; and when Peggy said she would bring me back next summer for the bathing and boating, if I liked, Laddie at once announced that next time, instead of coming on a motor-car, we must make the trip in his yacht. I wonder if we will.

One can go from Arcachon to Biarritz by train in four hours, but the road along which motor-cars or carriages must travel is a great deal longer, and it took us two days and a few hours into the third, to get there. Only I mustn't say "there," for it's "here" now; and I think I never saw such blue sea, with the sunshine scattered over it like myriads of diamonds; and the rocks, like giants, are rising out of the sea, almost looking into the windows of our hotel, where we are very gay, and delight in the possession of our boxes again. Biarritz is glorious—even the wind; and I'm glad we are to stay a fortnight, and run over the frontier into Spain. Still, I don't think I shall be sorry when it's time to be a Girl on a Motor-car once more.

THE PRINCE OF DREAMS

Little girl, you must wait.
The long white road gleams dusty and straight,
Far over the hills it leads to the town,
Out over the edge of the purple down;—
Little girl, you must wait.

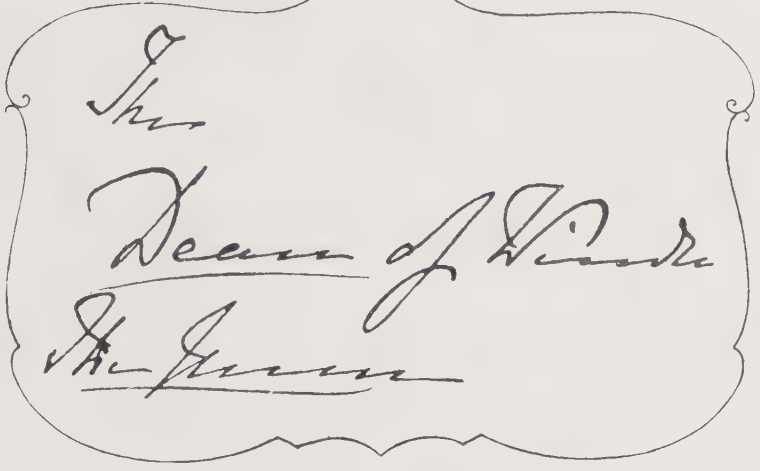
Little girl, you must wait,
With wistful eyes on the bars of the gate;
Over the hills is the Prince of Dreams,
Over the down where the sunset gleams;—
Little girl, you must wait.

Little girl, you must wait.
Ah! he tarries long, the Prince of your Fate,
And the gate is barred till he wins the prize,
Cold iron bars for your longing eyes,
And the breezes only to hear your sighs;
"O Prince, you are late!"
. . . . Little girl, you must wait.

ELYS PERRAN.

ON AUTOGRAPH COLLECTING

A Fascinating Hobby for Girls.



By Percy C. Mundy.

THE AUTOGRAPH OF QUEEN VICTORIA.
Which collectors will always esteem priceless.

WHEN looking through THE GIRL'S REALM the other day, I was interested to note what a vast number of its girl-readers are collectors. Very ingeniously conceived indeed are the objects some of you girls collect. I noted among them picture postcards, foreign stamps, china, postmarks, even cigarette photographs!—but only a few appealed for autograph letters. It is a marvel to me that girls do not go in more for this fascinating form of the collecting hobby. Perhaps in the beginning girls hesitate to adopt this hobby, because they fear to "write and worry" great people for their autographs. This they need not necessarily do. They may do a great deal by securing the co-operation of friends; indeed, by slow degrees, without any vast expenditure of money, a girl may become possessed of a collection of abiding interest (apart from any monetary value), one which will be the foundation of much personal knowledge, both biographical and historical. I can from my own experience assure any girl who makes this hobby her own that the accumulation of such mementoes will become an ever-increasing pleasure to her and ultimately prove the most fascinating pursuit.

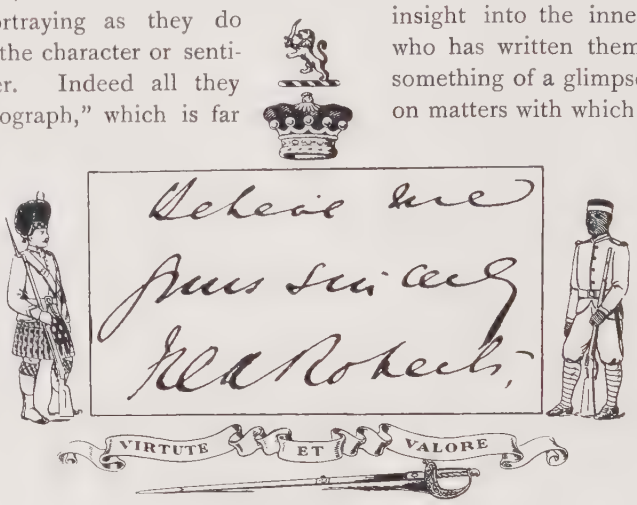
What memories do not these old letters, faded and stained by the hand of time, recall to us!

These few faded love-letters tell their story all too faithfully. They seem to lay bare to us the souls of the writers; indeed it is with a feeling akin to awe that we dwell on these links with the past, these tales of lives that are lived. How much more is it so in the case of the great men and women who are "not for an age but for all time." It is well to note in connection with autograph collecting as a serious pursuit that collectors do not confound the intellectual study of handwriting or the ambition for letters of celebrities with the collection of mere signatures, or that infamous persecution of public characters for specimens of their hand-writing.

I must confess that in my early days as an autograph-collector I myself was guilty of the last-named crime. Now I cannot but marvel at the long-suffering of those famous men and women who found time to reply with such invariable courtesy to the impertinent requests I then addressed to them. Among those who considerately complied with the request of a total stranger I may mention Madame Albani, Sir John Lubbock (now Lord Avebury), Sir Lawrence

Alma Tadema, the late Sir John Everett Millais, the late George Augustus Sala, Miss Marie Corelli, the late Sir Walter Besant, Rider Haggard (the first victim of enthusiastic admiration) and the late Lord Leighton.

As a rule, however, letters so obtained are of slight interest, portraying as they do little or nothing of the character or sentiments of the writer. Indeed all they supply is the "autograph," which is far from being the aim and object of the true collector's ambition. Signatures alone, except those of kings and queens, or famous people of remote ages, are rarely of much value.

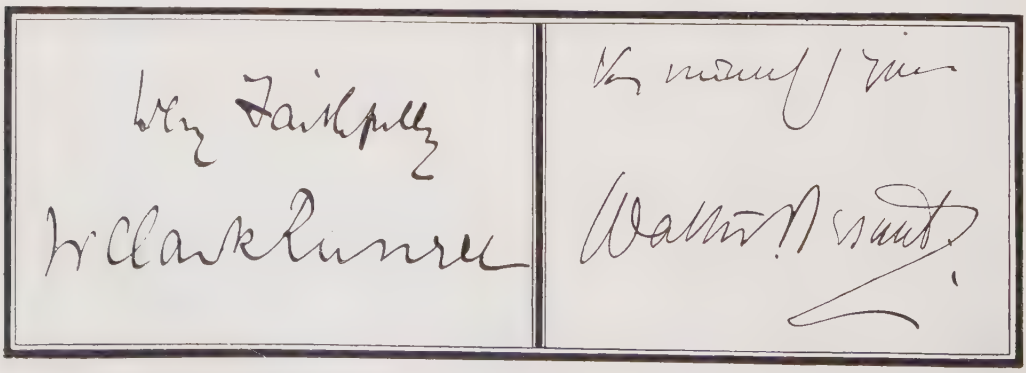


THE AUTOGRAPH OF LORD ROBERTS.

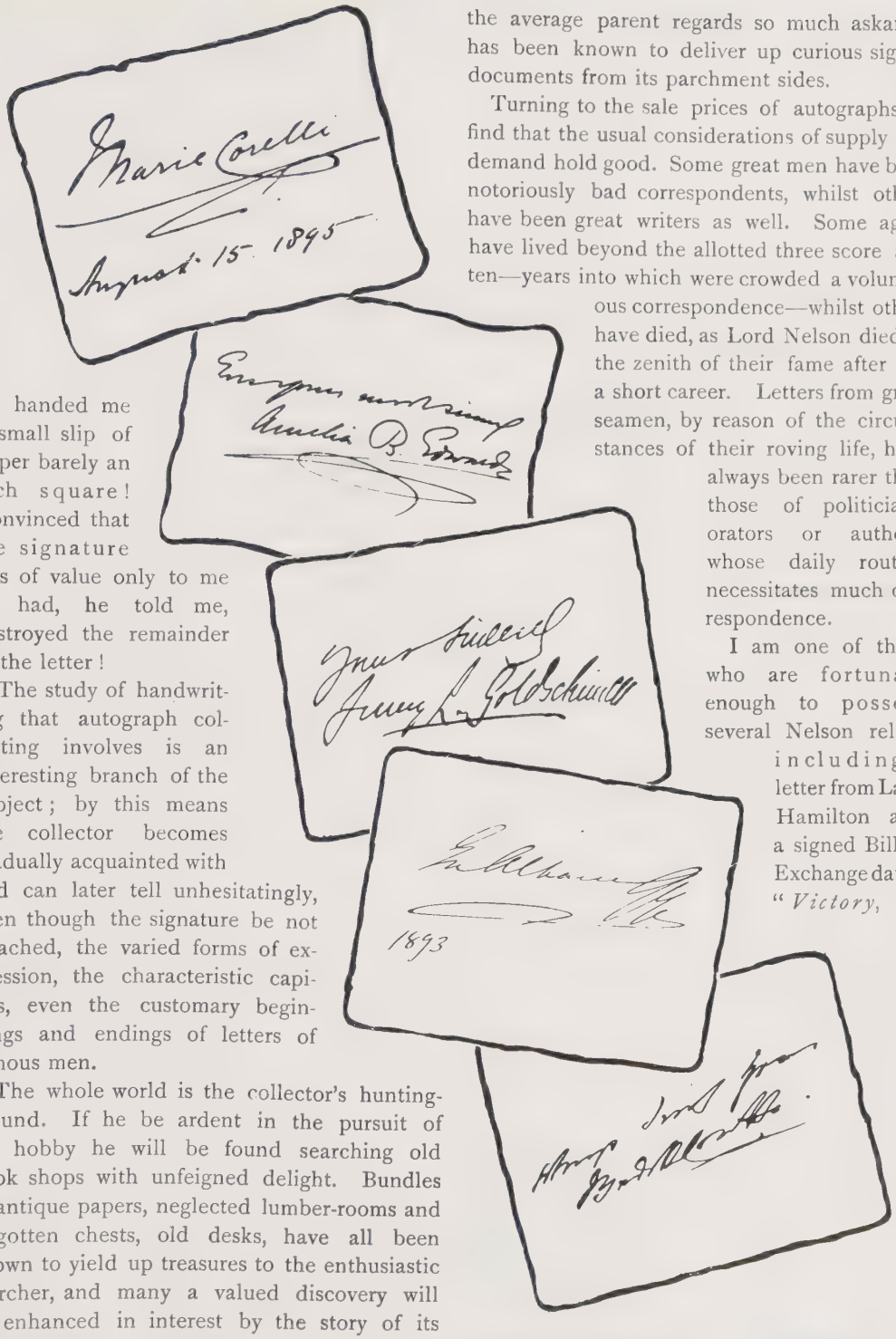
Sometimes, however, autographs so obtained have a unique interest that attaches not so much to the signature itself, but to the means by which it was obtained. One instance that I recall to mind is that of F. C. Burnand. His reply to my request for his autograph was a small sketch representing a comical-looking clown seated at a writing-table, whilst from his mouth proceed the words, "'Ere's a lark! I'll write and harsk for 'is haughty-graffe!" I need not say that the arrival of this not very complimentary response created in the mind of the youthful collector a feeling of intense gratitude to the genial editor of "Punch."

Passing from this bad, bold method of procedure, we turn to autograph collecting proper. The desire of the true collector is for letters of personal interest only, letters which give an insight into the inner life of the man who has written them, or which give us something of a glimpse into his opinions on matters with which his name will ever be permanently associated. Of inestimable value, for instance, are the letters from great generals referring to campaigns in which they have distinguished themselves, or from poets or painters discussing the merits of their art. These letters are priceless in the eyes of the true collector, and it may be taken for granted that they will always fetch high prices should they come into the market.

The collector has frequently to remind friends interested in his hobby that it is the *letter* and not the bare signature which he desires. Many valuable documents have been ruined by ignorance in this detail. Not long ago, for instance, I was promised by a friend an interesting autograph letter from Lord Roberts. You may judge of my dismay when



HOW TWO FAMOUS AUTHORS, W. CLARK RUSSELL AND SIR WALTER BESANT, SIGNED THEIR NAMES.



THE AUTOGRAPHS OF FIVE FAMOUS WOMEN—MARIE CORELLI, AMELIA B. EDWARDS, JENNY LIND (MME. GOLDSCHMIDT), MADAME E. ALBANI, AND THE BARONESS BURDETT COUTTS.

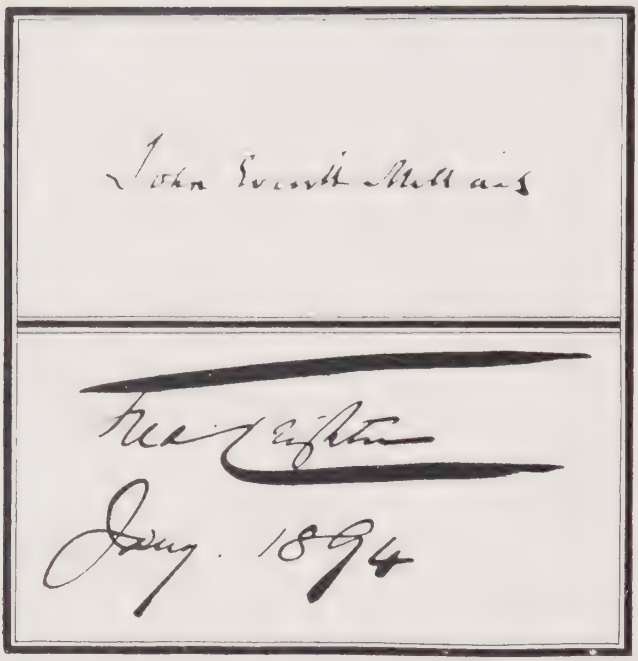
he handed me a small slip of paper barely an inch square! Convinced that the signature was of value only to me he had, he told me, destroyed the remainder of the letter!

The study of handwriting that autograph collecting involves is an interesting branch of the subject; by this means the collector becomes gradually acquainted with and can later tell unhesitatingly, even though the signature be not attached, the varied forms of expression, the characteristic capitals, even the customary beginnings and endings of letters of famous men.

The whole world is the collector's hunting-ground. If he be ardent in the pursuit of his hobby he will be found searching old book shops with unfeigned delight. Bundles of antique papers, neglected lumber-rooms and forgotten chests, old desks, have all been known to yield up treasures to the enthusiastic searcher, and many a valued discovery will be enhanced in interest by the story of its finding. There is scarcely a place, however remote, that may not suggest possibilities of "finds." Indeed, the nursery drum, which the average parent regards so much askance, has been known to deliver up curious signed documents from its parchment sides.

Turning to the sale prices of autographs we find that the usual considerations of supply and demand hold good. Some great men have been notoriously bad correspondents, whilst others have been great writers as well. Some again have lived beyond the allotted three score and ten—years into which were crowded a voluminous correspondence—whilst others have died, as Lord Nelson died, at the zenith of their fame after but a short career. Letters from great seamen, by reason of the circumstances of their roving life, have always been rarer than those of politicians, orators or authors, whose daily routine necessitates much correspondence.

I am one of those who are fortunate enough to possess several Nelson relics, including a letter from Lady Hamilton and a signed Bill of Exchange dated "*Victory*, at



TWO GREAT PAINTERS' SIGNATURES—THOSE OF THE LATE SIR JOHN MILLAIS AND THE LATE LORD LEIGHTON.
Both Presidents of the Royal Academy.

To return to the market value of autograph letters. During the recent war in South Africa, for instance, letters of past military commanders advanced in value. The centenary of any great event, too, is usually followed by a marked improvement in the autograph letters of men of the period, as can be easily noted in the reports of auction sales.

Some collectors of autographs confine their attention to one particular class of men, according to fancy, such as poets, soldiers, painters or musicians; this, in my opinion, is the best method.

Another good plan would be for a girl to confine herself entirely to a century or period, and endeavour to obtain letters from certain of the famous men and women of that time. This, from a scientific or educational point of view, is the more valuable.

But I have a shrewd idea that the average beginner will welcome autographs of any kind. Sea, 14th October, 1804." Such items as those in a collection cannot fail to fascinate. They are the nearest we can get to converse with those who are gone; indeed these "ink scratches" oft-times tell us more of their writers than the most inspired biography. Looking at this scrap of faded paper, I sometimes feel that, in my mind's eye, I can see the great admiral, his hand resting on this very document as he signed it in his cabin on board the *Victory*, then ploughing its way over the ocean, the day before the junction of the French and Spanish forces which he was to so utterly destroy in the following year.

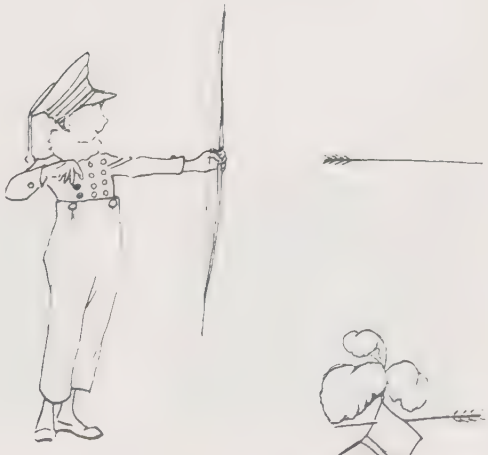
THE GENIAL RESPONSE OF F. C. BURNAND, EDITOR OF "PUNCH," TO THE APPEAL OF AN AUTOGRAPH HUNTER.

THE RARE BIRD.

Written and Illustrated by SYBIL REID.

"O Philip!" said Augustus,
"Come bring your bow and arrow!
There's the rarest kind of bird upon a tree!
O, Philip!" said Augustus,
"It is rather like a sparrow,
Do shoot it dead, and bring it here to me."

So Philip went and shot it
With his little bow and arrow,
That blue and scarlet wonder on a tree,
"Aha!" said he, "I've got it!
Pshaw, forsooth! *a sparrow!*"
It disappeared—and then he went to see.

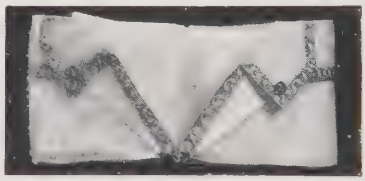


Now, children, when you're playing
With a little bow and arrow,
Don't shoot at what you cannot rightly see;
There really is no saying,
What looks so like a sparrow
May prove to be *your aunt* behind a tree!

Stocks made from Handkerchiefs.

ILLUSTRATED BY SPECIAL DESIGNS.

CERTAINLY nothing could be simpler, more attractive or more inexpensive for general wear than the stocks which are illustrated below, all of which are made from fancy pocket handkerchiefs.



A STOCK MADE FROM A MAN'S HANDKERCHIEF.

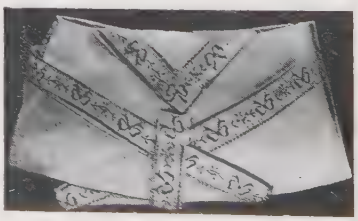
Any stock collar which is the proper size and depth, and closes in the back, may be used as a pattern, and the handkerchief with either a coloured or a lace border be cut and arranged upon it.

Handkerchiefs with white and black embroidered edges would make neat and pretty stocks for those who like black and white, or are in mourning.

In cutting the several pieces care is necessary, as every particle of the handkerchief is needed in the construction of any one of these stocks.

Where points are used they must be arranged with perfect evenness and sewed to the collar so that each side may be perfectly even and exactly alike.

Pretty pearl buttons may be used if desired to add still further to the attractiveness of the stock. Where ends are used, and tied together in a bow or knot in the front, they must be hemmed or hemstitched, neatly joined in at each end in the back, and then tied directly in the front as shown in the illustration of the stock made from a hemstitched handkerchief.



A TASTEFUL MOURNING STOCK.

Any number of variations in the form of these handkerchief stocks are permissible. The two turn-over pieces may be arranged to suit the fancy of the wearer, and fastened or held in place by tiny buttons.

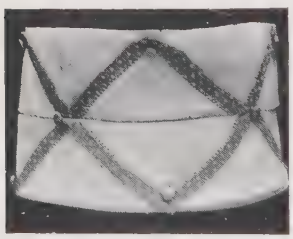
Stocks of this kind may be closed in the back with tiny lace buttons and loops, or held together with small white enamelled pins. If made with loose ends, which cross at the back and are brought around to tie in the front, they need no fastenings.

There is nothing that the average girl finds more difficult to do than to dress her neck becomingly in the summer; consequently, the stocks such as are here described would seem to fill a long-felt want, as well as to solve what has really become a serious problem. At the sales which occur so often, there are always opportunities for purchasing fancy pocket-handkerchiefs which may be used for these stocks.

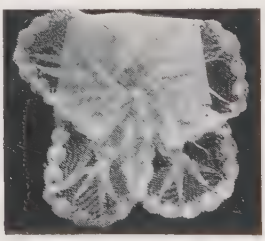
Those which have coloured borders will come in prettily for wear with the plain shirt and skirt costumes which are so popular with girls who go in for sports, and for those at school.

The advantage of these handkerchief stocks lies in their daintiness, and in their ability to be easily laundered as well as to be easily and quickly made.

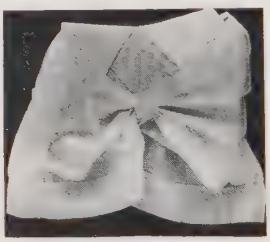
The clever girl will not consider herself limited by these designs, but will think out others.



A DAINTY STOCK TRIMMED WITH BUTTONS.



A LACE HANDKERCHIEF STOCK.



A BECOMING NECK ADORNMENT, MADE FROM A HEMSTITCHED HANDKERCHIEF.

Bowls: A Graceful Game for Girls.

THE END OF A GAME: IS IT A TIE?

Written and Illustrated by ISABEL MARKS.

Bowling, like croquet, is an eminently social game, promoting agreeable intercourse between young folks, and affording opportunity for some exciting games.

The size of the green varies from forty to sixty feet in length, according to the amount of ground available; the former is considered to give greater opportunity of close and interesting play. The green is subdivided into "spaces" twenty feet wide, the centre of each being shown by a distinguishing mark on the bank and at the four corners by a pin or white chalk lines. It is surrounded by a "ditch" composed of a narrow strip of gravel or by a small gutter-resembling excavation, and bounded by a bank of turf or by a length of wood two or three inches in height, somewhat resembling that used in polo to keep the balls within bounds. Several games can therefore be carried on simultaneously upon one green.

A small white ball made of earthenware, called the Jack, is the centre of attraction. It is thrown upon the green by the "leader" or first player, and the endeavour of one and all is to place the played bowl as near as possible to the jack whilst striving to prevent any one else from following this example. The regulation-sized bowl does not exceed sixteen inches and a half in circumference. To the tyro it seems strange to aim at a point some feet either to right or left of the object to be touched. Indeed, the judging of the exact divergence, or bias, from the straight course usually followed by a ball, and the proper amount of force to be exerted in order to obtain the desired result, are two of the greatest difficulties the beginner has to overcome. The condition of the turfed "space" necessarily affects the result of the attempt, and the tender care of the bowler for the welfare of the green is easily appreciated even by the casual onlooker.

The game can be played by two or by opposing teams or "rinks." To each person four bowls are allotted, the players taking their turn alternately. To avoid mistakes each bowl is marked with a number or the initial of its owner. Should a wrong bowl be played, if it belong to an opponent it must be replaced by that of the defaulting player, or if that of a partner it must lie where it has rolled. The score can be counted in three different ways; it may consist of a time limit, of a specified number of rounds or "ends," or of a certain number of points, the latter being obtained when a bowl lies within six feet of the jack, all bowls adding each one point to the score, provided they belong to friendly players and are not intersected by those of an opponent. Should the latter be the case, the bowl lying nearest the jack is declared the scorer of that particular end. The bowls frequently lie so close together and roll so near to the jack, that the knotty point of declaring the winner has often to be settled by measurement, a small light rod, called a standard, being used for that purpose, or two pegs connected by a cord fixed to the one and running through a hole in the other. The teams are under the charge of a skip or driver, who advises the kind of play to be pursued under the varying conditions of the game. This skip is supreme in command, and in con-

DRIVING—JUDGING THE DISTANCE.

—THE DELIVERY.

junction with his fellow-skip settles all disputes that may arise. Should they disagree, the services of an umpire are requisitioned.

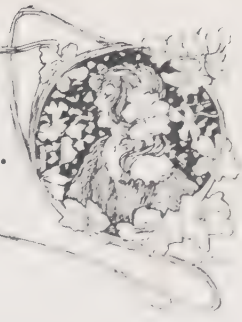
Play is begun by placing the "footer" or mat, eighteen by twelve inches in size, at the spot from which the bowling is delivered, and from which it is not moved until the end has been finished, when it is placed within a yard of the place where the jack lay at the conclusion of the previous round. The throwing of the jack and the right of first play is decided by agreement or by a toss-up. It is considered an advantage to open the game; the leader or first player, if she be skilled, may send the jack any length up the green that suits either her own play or that of her side. If the jack run within two yards of the side of the "space," it is removed to a sufficient distance to allow of either a left or right hand bias being given. When once thrown, much care is taken to preserve the jack from any contact with aught save a rolling bowl. If "burned" or touched by a neutral, the end must be replayed; if by a player, the opposing party has the option of continuing or re-commencing the round. Two diverse and different fates may befall the jack when run into the ditch by a bowl—a position fatal in the usual way, for a ditcher is in consequence held out of play during the end then in progress. If played in accordance with the rules of the Imperial Association, although the jack rest in the ditch, the end can be finished according to the usual procedure. If the regulations favoured by the London and Southern Counties decide the game, the jack is declared dead, the round void, and a new one re-commenced.

When a bowl is played by mistake it must be replaced by one's own bowl; if played out of its proper turn it may be allowed by the opposing rink to remain where it rests, or be played again in its due order. Should it by this undue activity have moved either a fellow bowl or the jack, a new end may be called for.

I am indebted to Mr. and Mrs. Pavia and some lady members of the Sydenham Bowling Club for kind assistance with this article, and for allowing me to take the photographs of the game in progress that illustrate it.

THE DELIVERY OF THE BOWL, AND THE PREPARATION FOR IT.

MY CHAT WITH THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD.



By ALICE CORKRAN.

My Dear Girls,—I have had many letters from you rejoicing in the peace. "Rosalie," "Georgie," "Violet," and others all echo the same sentiment—"Is it not grand?" and Georgie adds, "Is it not splendid that there should be peace?"

Oh, yes, to think of it rejoices the heart! No more hacking and wounding, no more fear to open the paper in the morning, no more trembling of heart as we look down the columns, sick with fear, lest we should detect some loved name among those of the sufferers; and if we do not, to know that there is no name set down the sight of which does not bring sorrow to some household, some heart-break to wife or mother, daughter or sister. All this is now over. The blessed words have been spoken, the treaty has been signed, our foes are our friends and more children are added to the great family of which our country is the mother. Our enemies have fought well and they are beaten—beaten as brave men are beaten. Let us remember only that England has a solemn duty to perform and that England's daughters must be ready to help her to perform it. Where God gives dominion he exacts charity and patience and a noble self-control in those who hold the sway.

To-day I have to deal with the problems in some of the letters that you have written. There are a few that I hesitated to notice because they deal with engagements. I came to the conclusion that I would do so as the career of love and marriage is as definite in its claims, rather more, I was about to say, than are those of any other for which girls have to prepare themselves. For what is their school-learning, their daily discipline but a preparation for the great act of their lives? To accustom our thoughts to an ideal is to prepare ourselves to act finely in it.

Some of the letters that I have received deal with very tragic realities, others touch upon points of conduct. "Carinth," whose letter comes from afar, puts a terrible case to me, a case that involves a girl's life and a man's reputation, and I know not what else. It is nothing less than this. A friend of hers, a young man, was employed by his chief—in what branch of the public or private service she does not say—to find out the author of a crime. While doing so he became engaged to a girl to whom he confided the secret of his mission. Judge of his horror when he found she was the culprit. The case of conscience as it stands in Carinth's letter is this: "Ought the young man to denounce his betrothed, and let her forfeit her life?" Carinth says, "If he tells what he knows, she will most certainly be hanged. Or should he keep her secret, and so play false to his employers?"

In the judgment of some people this question is easily answered. In the new relationship into which he and the girl have entered, these folk would say, his first duty is assuredly to her. He has contracted an obligation which overrides all other considerations. The duty to his employer is altogether subsidiary to the fact of his engagement. In fact, the best way to settle it as a case of conscience is to settle it as a case of feeling. Let any one try to imagine himself or herself (I can hear these people saying), or any human being playing the part of accuser in such a case. It is unthinkable in sentiment and therefore it must be so in morals. The young man may feel sorry for his employer, perhaps on the whole he has good reason to feel sorry for himself, but there it is. The girl has placed her whole life in his keeping and the charge is sacred. But, of course, even these people would allow, it could not as an obligation go further than that. He might quite easily be unable to bear the shock of his changed opinion of her and refuse to go on with his engagement. He has (I can imagine many people contending only to suppose that the attempt to do his duty to his employer has been frustated by an insuperable difficulty. Suppose he had lost his life it would have been so frustrated. Suppose he had failed by any other overmastering accident. Well, he has failed in this instance by the tremendous accident of his engagement to the girl, so logically failed that perhaps, the master himself would be the person to feel the strongest contempt for him if he betrayed the secret.

But all this reasoning neglects the question purely as a matter of right or wrong. What do you girls think of it? I will leave the question open, so that you may tell me your opinions. Of course, in all this I assume that Carinth has not in the least overstated her problem. I mean that she has not touched into it, the more tragic issues of life and death for the sake of deepening our interest in it. Sometimes I am afraid you do more or less unconsciously draw up your problems in this way. There is a certain air of literary contrivance in this case as it stands that does not leave me altogether free from suspicion. The young man is employed to find out the author of a crime. What is the young man? Is he a private detective? If this is so why did he speak of his business to his betrothed? Then the case is of such an appalling nature, nothing less is to happen to the unhappy heroine

in the event of detection than death at the hands of the public executioner. Oh dear, oh dear! Is it quite so bad as that, or is it no worse that this, that the young man has been put on the track of some little peccadillo of a very slight nature, and his recognition of the offender would subject her to a reprimand? . . . Is it, "Who killed a fellow-creature?" or is it only, "Who stole the jam?" I daresay the truth lies between these two assumptions.

Whether it does or does not in this instance, I think it highly desirable that all cases should be stated exactly as they are. When they are so stated I think they are extremely interesting. They have, in fact, all the interest of good fiction, and many of them that have passed through my hands in this page might, I venture to say, have formed exceedingly good situations for novels or for plays. They have their ethical value for the thinker as pure problems, and an emotional and imaginative value for others as illustrations of the play of life, character and incident.

I have had a good many letters from you relating to my Chat in the last number upon manners.

MARY writes: "I was interested in your Chat of this month about manners. I agree with much that you say. Still I think our want of manners is part of our national frankness, and I should be sorry if that frankness grew less in the new reign. We do not mean to hurt anybody. We simply stand, if I may so express it, by our feelings. What we wish others to know is, 'I do not know you and I do not want to know you, not because I do not like you, but because I have no time to make your acquaintance.' Don't you think it is more frank to *seem* exactly what you feel, rather than to mislead others by a show of greater kindness, and thus burden yourself with difficulties, for, after, all we cannot make a new friend without taking upon us new responsibilities."

VIVIAN writes very much in the same strain: "I don't agree with you as to our want of manners. Manner is the expression of what we feel. And if I do not want to know such and such a person, why not let her see it? It is not that I know anything against her, but simply because I have not the inclination. I would do her a good turn to-morrow if she needed it, if she were ill or poor, but she does not want it. She is merely some one going her way, as I am going mine. We are like two ships that pass in the night, and we go by without signalling each other. It seems to me that in a world where there is so much to be done and thought about, it is foolish to waste time in meaningless formalities."

MAVOURNEEN says: "I am sure you are quite right about what you say of the English want of manners. I am Irish, and the English people hurt me. They always seem to wish to keep me at arm's length. Perhaps that is not their real feeling, but they are so blunt and so cold. I am sure they make excellent friends, but they are terrible as acquaintances. One girl told me she thought the Irish were insincere, and all I could find upon which she founded this charge was that we say pleasanter things than we mean and have not the courage to give pain. We have the courage to be anything but ungracious. But we are not insincere. We can stand by what we mean as resolutely as any English girl can, and I do not see why we cannot be as truthful, by not telling the truth quite so baldly."

What strikes me in these letters is that neither MARY nor VIVIAN associate frankness with pleasantness. They seem to think that truth is always disagreeable, is always hard. I am quite sure that if you will only look into the matter fully you will see that this is at the root of bad manners. We do not care to please. To associate sincerity and truth with pleasantness does not occur to most of us. And truth is quite as much associated with what is pleasant as with what is unpleasant. Now what I feel is, that if you were determined to be pleasant to strangers and, if possible, always to say the nice thing to them, and never to say the hurtful thing except when you cannot help it, you would find you are just as truthful as when you ignore everything that is kindly. Are you quite sure also that there is not some snobbery in your attitude of mind, that you are not afraid of making acquaintances who are not your social equals? And as to excusing it all by pleading that you are ready to do a good turn to one you have steadily ignored, it is like saying that when a person is bruised black and blue you are ready to give her a pennyworth of ointment for her wounds, but not before. Now, is this not founded upon the old idea of patronage? And what I mean by good manners has nothing to do with patronage, but is simply founded upon fellow-feeling. There is no necessity to enter upon a friendship. If it was more of a habit to seek to please: to have always a kindly relationship with others, there would be no thought of any further development. CLOTHILDE would not find difficulty in speaking to another girl, pleading that she has nothing to say to her. Surely we need not seek very far to find some little subject of discussion that would be pleasant to have and pleasant to remember. MAVOURNEEN must strengthen her temperament. She must remember that many times those who hurt do not mean to hurt, but they simply have certain sensibilities blunted that prevent them from understanding the pain to which her more emotional nature is liable.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

A Serial by Ethel Turner, and a Sequel to "Rhoda" in the New Volume.

"HOW I CAN EARN A LIVING" is the subject of a new department which will be started in the October number of THE GIRL'S REALM, under the direction of Miss Frances H. Low, whose articles on women's employment in *The Daily Chronicle* excited so much notice a short time since. In this department Miss Low will give advice to girls on this important subject. I feel sure it will add greatly to the helpfulness of the magazine.

My girls will be pleased to know that a very charming serial story called "LITTLE MOTHER MEG," by ETHEL TURNER, will follow "The Daughters of a Genius," and that a sequel to "Rhoda" will begin in the new volume.

In answer to many enquiries I am obliged to state that there is no boy's paper published in connection with THE GIRL'S REALM.

Photographs by Lafayette.

THE LADY OF LILIES.

From an original drawing by ARTHUR KYNASTON.

[*See p.* 861.

HER MAGNIFICENT HOLIDAY.

A Day in the Life of Emmer Alice.

By W. Pett Ridge.

Author of "Mord Em'ly," "Outside the Radius," &c.

BANK Holiday was over—it extended in Spitalfields until Wednesday, and went then with the greatest reluctance, hanging about in small furtive streets until the police were called in—and with no school to fill the hours Emmer Alice found herself confronted with a difficulty. Her mother went out to work before eight o'clock in the morning (there used to be a baby-brother for company, a white-faced little chap, who had just learnt to call his sister "Em," when he was taken away for a ride to East Ham Cemetery and did not return); her closest friend, Rosie Cullen, had gone off to some remote village with a label round her neck as though she were luggage, to spend a holiday in the country. This, then, was the situation. Plenty of acquaintances, but no friends. Plenty of imagination, but no money. Plenty of folk about, but no one to whom she cared to talk.

Her mother before going out had recited all the usual warnings, together with dire penalties that ought to have made Emmer Alice's blood freeze within her, but had in point of fact no result at all because custom had dulled their edge. The girl made selection of these dogmatic commands, others she ignored. For instance, she made the bed, dusted the room, and set straight the frame which contained a photograph of her father, did something perfunctory to the fireplace. This over, the hour, as she heard by the announcement of the nearest church, was but ten and the sun was beginning to take a side view of the two windows. She thought of Rosie Cullen riding on cows, climbing gooseberry-trees, fishing for poultry, and experiencing all the delights which that young lady had foreshadowed.

"I know what!" said the little girl suddenly. "I'm going to have a hower or two at the seaside."

On the way through the yard of the model dwellings she endeavoured to adopt two small children, a boy and a girl, neatly-dressed little people, but they sneered at her unrestrainedly, and their mother suddenly gave up the sport of gossiping to call them insistently.

"Cyril! Mibel! You come 'ere this minute. How dare you talk to strangers! What next I wonder!"

It was only a pleasant stroll through the City, and Emmer Alice knew her way so well that there was no necessity to court reprimand by asking information of constables. Busy silk-hatted men made way for her, and when the traffic was stopped to allow her to cross a street she lifted her skirts in a refined way (skirts a safe ten inches from the ground); on a 'bus conductor asking her satirically where she had left her brougham, she replied at once that it was waiting in a by-street because the sight of his face would be sure to frighten the horses. And here presently was the Embankment, and not so very many people about, and the hatless girl drew in a breath as she looked at the broad, full, silvery river, trim and demure on one side and smoky and unkempt on the other; tugs bustling along hurriedly with barges replete with cargo, and a steamer full of passengers going (so a girl with a perambulator said) to Hampton Court.

"I'm going further than that," said Emmer Alice.

"You look like it," remarked the other girl caustically. "Going on a yachting trip I should think from your 'pearance."

"Never you mind about my appearance," said Emmer Alice defiantly.

EMMER ALICE'S ENCOUNTER AND WARFARE OF WORDS WITH THE GIRL WITH THE PERAMBULATOR.—(*p.* 855.)

"*You* don't apparently."

"Look after your baby," recommended Emmer Alice. "That's quite enough for you."

"It isn't my baby."

"Whose is it, then?" asked Emmer Alice, for once taken off her guard.

"Mother's!" replied the other girl.

Worsted in this contest, Emmer Alice found her first decision confirmed; a holiday of the imagination had to be spent alone. She was at Brighton or Eastbourne (and not quite sure which), and as she stood on the railings to look at the Pier she pretended to be elegantly dressed in pale blue with a scarlet sunshade and such a picture-hat that never was on sea or land, offering as it did all the rarest flowers and most of the choicest fruits. She was very languid and haughty in her manner too, and, strolling down towards Cleopatra's Needle, carried on conversation in a pained, drawling voice with a suppositious companion.

"One couldn't go abroad last year," she said, "owing to the war. What I mean to say is—oh yes, dreadful nuisance altogether. Can't think why they didn't put a stop to it earlier. What?"

She found a thin piece of wire that had held a soda-water bottle and twisted it deftly into the form of a pince-nez and this helped her greatly, until a boy came along who, becoming envious of her student-like appearance, said gruffly, "Give that 'ere," and for the sake of peace she handed it over. She was a shy girl, always on the side of peace, and for this reason she frequently preferred her own company; the making of friendship leading invariably to contention. She bowed precisely to one or two people driving along the Embankment in hansoms; and in the gardens she sat awhile, watching the foreigners, who, with their red guide-books, wrestled with the difficulties of London. When they talked to each other excitedly,

"CLOSE BY, RUSSIAN INFANTS WITH WONDERFUL EYES AND CRINKLED HAIR HAD AN AMATEUR GAME OF TENNIS." (*p.* 857.)

"AT HOME IN THE YARD OF THE MODEL DWELLINGS WHERE SHE LIVED, CHILDREN WERE PLAYING."—(*p.* 857.)

"ONE LITTLE GIRL WENT BY WITH A NEW TOY."

Emmer Alice was somewhere abroad — geography not being her strong point, she was not prepared to state the exact spot—abroad for the benefit of her health and staying at the best hotel in the place; her husband (who was a Count) was a youth with long hair, over in the band enclosure on the penny chairs, possessed of considerable wealth; she changed him quickly when he rose from his seat, and discovered the circumstance that his face was pimpled.

Thus Emmer Alice expended her morning.

At home, in the yard of the model dwellings where she lived, children were playing—children of a younger growth than herself—and close by, Russian infants with wonderful eyes and crinkled hair had an amateur game of tennis. She talked to them, asking what they meant by intruding, but their acquaintance with the English language had its limitations; Emmer Alice, however, gave them a long message for their parents, advising an immediate return to their own native country. One little girl went by with a new toy, and Emmer Alice sighed, for she was not so grown-up and not so far past the age when small horses and large dolls appeal, that she could look on at the situation without envy.

"I could do with a shop full of 'em," said Emmer Alice.

"'I SHOULD HAVE BEEN 'AVING THE RAREST OLD GAME OF SKIPPING THAT EVER WAS,' SAID EMMER ALICE, 'DODGING MY TURN FOR 'OLDING THE ROPE.'"—(p. 858.)

A meal indoors. A meal of such frugality that it required an imagination more vivid than Emmer Alice possessed to pretend that it was of a luxurious or even of a filling nature. It had one good point in its favour though, one not to be found with meals at expensive restaurants, in that it was soon over, and there remained a good long afternoon to be spent just as she pleased. Emmer Alice at this moment wished very much that Board Schools did not take holidays. She had sometimes resented the fact that they existed at all, but just now she was of opinion that they constituted a great boon. For at this particular hour, how would she have been engaged?

"I should 'ave been in the playground," said Emmer Alice to an undecided reflection of herself in the cheap looking-glass on the wall, "in the playground, and I should have been 'aving the rarest old game of skipping that ever was, dodging my turn for 'olding the rope, and getting two to every other gel's once. *Or*, I should have been lookin' on at a game of 'op-scotch, *or* I should 'ave been playin' at shops. As it is——"

She rubbed her head to arouse invention. Suddenly she started, and took her black straw hat from the nail, and blew the dust from it.

"*I* know," said Emmer Alice, triumphantly, "*I* know. Victoria Park!"

There was recklessness in the way in which the girl washed herself and did something with an imperfect comb to her hair, tying it at the back with a stay-lace. When she had finished, she took a very careful and critical look at herself in the glass and seemed not altogether displeased with the result.

"You'll do!" she admitted to herself.

Walking out into Commercial Street, she felt herself to be the superior of most women, and to children who, lying prone, were pursuing art studies with the aid of a piece of chalk, she gave orders in a manner so insistent, that they rose at once and obeyed her by flying to the sanctuary of their own doorsteps. In Hackney Road she selected her tram-car with care and acumen. What was required was a dull, good-tempered conductor, with plenty of passengers on top and few within; this would enable her to snatch a ride on the step of (with luck) two minutes' duration. She took a series of cars, slipping off deftly as the boots of the descending conductor came in sight, and travelled thus as far as Kay Street. It was in making an effort to step on the rear of a fresh car at this point, and experiencing some difficulty, that a bashful young man seated inside at the corner, assuming that she desired to be a regular passenger, stepped out with anxious politeness, took her arm and hauled her into the car. At that moment the conductor came down.

"Any more fares?" demanded the conductor suspiciously.

"Now you *'ave* been and done it," said the little girl to the bashful young man. "You pulled me in and you'll 'ave to pay for me."

"But I thought——"

"Never mind what you thought" said Emmer Alice coolly. "Pay the kinductor my fare and look pleasant."

This was confusing for the shy youth, but it enabled Emmer Alice to reach Cambridge Heath Station in comfort and in style. She warned the young man, in alighting, to be more careful another time, and walked along Booth Street to the Park, very well pleased with herself. Wonderful place, London, she thought: the sharpest people always came out on top. Poor Rosie Cullen; impossible to avoid pitying Rosie Cullen. In the country, as Emmer Alice understood it, people were dull and slow of speech; not skilful in retorts and deliberate to an excess. Here in London at any rate every one was alive, every one was trying to out-vie every one else, and the feeling of competition stimulated the best efforts. A small greengrocer's shop, which was not so much a shop as a hole in the wall, had a proud notice on an empty half sieve: "What We Say We Do, We Do Do!"

Victoria Park was rather closely bordered by houses, but it was a rare fine open space, and the girl took a luxurious run on a part of the green grass because a notice there dared her to do so. There came a pleasant scent from the grass; easier, too, to walk upon than pavements, especially when the sole of one of your boots was imperfect. She found herself near to a spot where boys were playing cricket, and, sitting down, constituted herself a self-appointed

AN OBJECT OF ENVY: "SHE'S GOT A NEW ROPE."

"CHILDREN WHO, LYING PRONE, WERE PURSUING ART STUDIES WITH THE AID OF A PIECE OF CHALK."—(*p.* 858.)

"'OR,' SAID EMMER ALICE, 'I SHOULD HAVE BEEN LOOKING ON AT A GAME OF 'OP SCOTCH.'"—(*p.* 858.)

umpire, crying "That's out!" when the wicket-keeper made an unsuccessful attempt to stump the batsman, and declaring "No ball!" when the bails were sent flying. This made her so unpopular that a small deputation of the batting team presently came over and gave her a choice, either to keep her head shut and stay where she was, or to run off with all convenient dispatch.

"Jest which you like," said the leader of the party generously. "Be'ave or bunk."

"I hate to see kids pretendin' they're grown-up," said Emmer Alice, rising and stepping back to a safe distance. "Makes my face ache lookin' at them."

"Some'ing else will make your face ache, my gel," remarked the leader threateningly, "if you ain't careful."

"If I had a face like yours, do you know what I'd do?"

"Some'ing silly, I s'pose."

"I'd pawn it," said Emmer Alice, preparing to run; "I'd pawn it and lose the ticket."

The boys did not catch her, partly because she was quick of foot and partly because they were hampered by a feeling of manly dignity from chasing a mere girl. The run brought her to the pond, where, although they at first resented her presence, she joined other children in trying to catch miniature fish with their hands, a form of angling that, in its want of success, has many of the qualities that endear salmon-fishers to the sport. A few children had taken off shoes and stockings and were stalking in the water. She nearly landed a fine specimen that was either an insect or a fish, but it slipped into the water again, and an expression of sympathy from other anglers created a temporary friendship which only community of failure can make. A covered barge was going round the lake, but that was out of the question, because it charged a fare.

"Come on," said the others, dispirited, "let's go and 'ave a game of something else."

"Like me to come with you?" asked Emmer Alice.

"Got any money to buy sweets with?"

"Not a sou," replied Emmer Alice frankly.

There seemed at first some possibility that this would be a disqualification, but when the others had consulted together they announced a grudging consent, and the whole party, with recruits obtained on the way, went and had the rarest games of shops you ever saw. "Please, ma'am, I should like a new picture-hat with

"EMMER ALICE JOINED OTHER CHILDREN IN TRYING TO CATCH MINIATURE FISH WITH THEIR HANDS."—(*p.* 859.)

feathers, and a new mantle, and a new pale pink dress to trail on the ground." "Certainly, madam (said the pretended dressmaker obligingly), pray take a seat for a moment; Miss Wilson, forward, please, to measure." Miss Wilson thereupon took a long blade of grass and took Emmer Alice's size round the waist and from shoulder to shoulder and from waist downwards, and the pretended dressmaker, begging her customer to come again on Thursday to try on, said the hat and mantle departments were upstairs, please. They played it all with sedateness and it was a very good game, affording Emmer Alice the sensation of mixing in extremely good society where money was as nothing, providing you obtained the clothes you required, until some grown-up folk came and watched them, and then they had to give it up, for illusions quickly go when looked at through the spectacles of maturity.

"What about a tug-of-war?" suggested Emmer Alice.

Some of the girls had to confess that they were not quite sure what a tug-of-war really was: others intimated that they had once known, but pressure of other knowledge had jostled the information out of their memory. It therefore became Emmer Alice's proud duty to describe the ethics and rules of the game. You could have seven aside; one girl stood at the middle to act as referee. Properly speaking you ought to have a rope, and then each team tugged as hard as it jolly well could; failing a rope, the two centre girls were to clasp hands at the line, and every member of the team was to pull the girl in front of her for all she was worth: the team that succeeded in pulling the last girl of the opposite lot over the mark, was judged to be the winner.

EMMER ALICE'S TUG OF WAR.—(*p.* 861.)

"And mind you pull," said Emmer Alice privately to her set, "or else I'll——"

Room for ingenuity in this tug-of-war. The members of Emmer Alice's team pulled hard at first, then, with a pretence of weakening, allowed themselves to be dragged back; only when the opposing set had nearly got most of them across the line, and had, indeed, decided that efforts might be relaxed, that, on Emmer Alice's whispered command, the team, suddenly bestirred, pulled with all their might; the others, before they could scream, were tugged with a rush well over the dividing line, and the referee (who had the qualification of being able to whistle) gave the first game in their favour.

The warm misty dusk of an August evening was in the yard of the model dwellings when Emmer Alice again returned home. She ran up the stone steps and opened her door with the key which hung around her neck and under the bodice of her dress, saying "Brayvo me!" in exultation at finding no mother waiting there. Five minutes later her mother came in, tired.

"Well, you *are* a goo' little gel, Emmer Alice," said her mother as she sipped the cup of tea which in two moments was ready for her. "What you been up to, all day? I expect little Rosie Cullen's enjoying of herself away in the country."

"I've been to Brighton," replied Emmer Alice promptly, "I've been abroad and I've been fishing in Scotland, and I wouldn't be Rosie Cullen for forty thousand pound."

"You're as fond of a joke," said her mother, allowing Emmer Alice to pull off her boots for her, "as your poor father was before we was married. 'Pon me word—that's my corn!—if I 'aven't a jolly good mind to give you a kiss, jest for once."

THE LADY OF LILIES.

Our Frontispiece this Month.

WHERE there is shade on the breast of the river,
Shade and the whisper of air;
Where the light ripples come dancing a-quiver,
Brushed by the breezes astir.
Lo! where the lilies in beauty are gleaming,
Lazily floating and graciously dreaming,
Surely a Naiad, in sooth or in seeming,
Toys with their blossoms fair.

Swayed in the lap of the slow-moving water,
Buoyed by her dark floating hair,
Blest be the glow of the sunshine that brought her
Up into light, into air:
Up from her grotto where sunbeams have found her,
Wakened from sleep wherein Winter has bound her,
Now she floats lightly, while ripples lap round her,
Pure as the lilies there.

Swift as the kingfisher darts o'er the lilies,
Gone is the sunlight's bright ray;
Gone is my vision, the Lady of Lilies,
Sadly the tall poplars sway.
Far from the eastward the night wind comes sighing,
Home to its nest the blue heron is flying;
She of my vision in slumber is lying,
Dreaming the hours away.

ARTHUR KYNASTON.

AN ENGLISH GIRL'S ADVENTURES IN THE HIGHLANDS.

By GEORGE E. MANSFIELD.

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

It was a bright, clear morning in August when Mrs. Holt and her son saw Lilian off from Euston.

Off for the holidays! What does not that mean to a girl, especially to a London girl who is leaving the smoke of the big city behind and making her first trip to Scotland? And then to Lilian there was the additional excitement of travelling all by herself as far as Glasgow. Three other persons indeed shared the compartment with her, but they were strangers. For the first time in her life Miss Lilian Holt had, as her brother Ned amiably observed, "gone off without a keeper."

She revelled in her freedom. Was she not sixteen? Surely she could take care of herself. As the train swept out of the station she settled down in her corner, and turned her eyes towards her fellow-travellers. A wonderful old lady, all wrapped up in shawls and rugs, sat opposite. Her maid occupied another corner. A Bond Street Beau, who had arrived in a cab at the last moment, was the fourth passenger.

"If you feel bored," said this gentleman, with a patronising air, "I have some rare good books in my portmanteau."

Lilian darted a keen glance at him. Was he treating her as a child? He must be taught different.

"Thanks," she replied. "I don't need entertaining."

Old Lady Macquarrie enjoyed the snub. She approved of keeping young men in their proper place. With a light touch of her shoe she nudged Lilian's foot, and from that moment they were fast friends.

On swept the train. Full steam after they passed Willesden, and it seemed no time before they got to Rugby Station.

Lady Macquarrie had opened conversation. Travelling North each season, she knew every point of interest along the line, and her cheery talk set Lilian quite at ease.

"That's Preston now," she remarked, as the engine driver slowed down for the fifth time. "The next town is Carlisle, and before we stop again we shall be over the Border."

What a journey it was! To Lilian everything was new and strange. Such stretches of moor and heather, such rugged hills, such odd little cottar's huts.

"But don't you feel the difference in the air, my dear?" said Lady Macquarrie. "Open the window, Margaret." To her maid. "There's nothing like a whiff of the Scotch heather for picking one up after the London season."

As Lilian drank in the perfume-laden air, new life seemed to spring up within her. The Borderland is bleak in spring, but when the autumn tints are on the hills and the pine woods rustle in the breeze, it has a charm peculiarly its own.

Still the train swept on, past Maxwelltown, past Carstairs, and when it dashed into Glasgow Central there was her Uncle George waiting for her. A hearty kiss from good Lady Macquarrie, a frigid bow to the Bond Street Beau, and Lilian sprang on to the platform.

"Come along, Lil," cried her uncle. "There's not a moment to lose. We must cross to Platform 4, and catch the Arran Express. Got any baggage?"

"Of course, uncle," said his niece. "How could I come to Scotland for a month without some things?"

"Well, we've no time to look for luggage," said Mr. Wilson, "it must come on by itself."

Taking his niece by the arm, Lilian's uncle hurried her round to the next platform, where the Coast train was ready to start.

"Jump in, quickly," he cried, throwing open a carriage door. "It leaves to the minute."

Even as he spoke, the guard came bustling up, waved his flag, and the next instant the train was steaming out of the station.

"Rather a close shave," said Mr. Wilson, "but it's good we managed it. Your aunt is expecting you to-night, and the cart will be down at the Ferry."

A quick run of forty minutes brought them to Ardrossan, and for the first time Lilian beheld the Firth of Clyde. The sun was setting behind the Arran peaks, Holy Isle rose calm and massive to the left, while further south, far in the distance, gleamed the Irish coast.

All day a strong wind had been blowing up Channel. White horses were chasing each other, and as soon as the *Duchess*, the steamer she and her uncle boarded, passed the breakwater Lilian began to feel queer. But her uncle would not hear of her going below.

"Not at all," he said. "You take my arm, Lil, and come to the bow and get the breeze. No fear of becoming ill so long as you keep your face to the wind.

Mr. Wilson was right. The steamer tossed up and down. More than once a whiff of spray dashed over the paddle-box. But holding on by the rails, Lilian and her uncle weathered the gale, and when they reached Brodick, a cup of tea in the saloon soon revived the girl. After that, they sailed along under the shelter of the Island, so Lil felt all right.

"Ah! there they are," cried her uncle, as they reached Whiting Bay.

He pulled out his handkerchief and waved it in the air. Turning her eyes to the shore, Lilian beheld a second handkerchief waving from the top of the Jetty.

"But how are we to get ashore?" she asked.

"See, there's the Ferry coming," said her uncle. "Often it's so rough here the passengers can't be landed, but I think they'll manage it to-night."

As it was, however, old Ker, the ferryman, thought it wise to make use of the steamer's

"THE PATH WAS SO STEEP AND TORTUOUS THAT JACK ESCOMB HAD TO ASSIST LILIAN MORE THAN ONCE."—(*p.* 865.)

cable. For the South End is not sheltered like Brodick and Lamlash, but exposed to the Channel winds. The surf was dashing on the beach. Lest the Ferry might be swept upon the rocks, a hawser was attached to it, and the sailors on the *Duchess* stood ready by the donkey engine, to pull the boat back if Ker gave the signal. No rowing was required. The big waves drifted the Ferry to the shore. Once, indeed, old Ker raised his hand, the steam whistle blew from the steamer, and the rope was tightened. But dodging the rocks, the ferryman got round the Bar, and in five minutes more Lil and her uncle were landed on the Jetty.

"So here you are," cried Mrs. Wilson cheerily, as the pair came up to the waggonette."

"Get in, Lilian," said her uncle, "we're half an hour late as it is, and the dinner will be ruined. Where's Harold, mother?"

"With the Escomb boys," replied Mrs. Wilson.

"Didn't he know that Lilian was coming?"

"Yes," said Mrs. Wilson, "he came down on purpose with me, but Jack Escomb and he are such chums. We ladies have no chance."

"We'll see about that," rejoined Mr. Wilson. "Hullo there! Harold, Harold, come here, sir."

Lilian's cousin, a tall Eton youth, two years her senior, was standing talking to young Escomb at the refreshment stall. Turning his head when he heard his father's voice, Harold came forward quickly, and took off his cap.

"What the mischief do you mean, sir?" asked his father. "Here's Lil come all the way from London. Any amount of boxes, and neither you nor Fred down at the Jetty to lend a hand. Ah, Escomb, we'll give you a lift up the hill. Jump in, there's lots of room. There we are now, Donald."

"Ready sir?" asked the driver.

"Yes."

Old Donald Black raised the horses' heads and cracked his whip.

"You're forgetting me," cried Harold.

"Go down to the Jetty, sir, and see about Lilian's boxes. Have them put into a cart and brought up at once. If you arrive in time for dinner, you'll get some, if you don't——"

Off spun the waggonette.

"This is too bad, George," said Mrs. Wilson, smiling.

"Serves him right," rejoined her husband.

"No," said Lilian, "it's really too bad, Aunt. My box hasn't come by this steamer."

"Ha! ha! ha!" exclaimed Mr. Wilson, chuckling to himself, "I guess Harold has been sold this time."

What a drive it was! The hills had their autumn tints. Much rain had fallen of late, and the heather shone bright and clear. Up, and up, and up. It is a steep road to the South End, and Donald Black was content to let the horses pick their way. Up, and up, and up, eighty feet, a hundred feet, two hundred feet above the level of the sea. The precipice went sheer down from the track, and far below Lilian could see two smacks scudding along in the evening breeze.

"Good evening, sorr."

A gruff voice greeted them from the road.

"Hullo, Angus!" cried Mr. Wilson, as a Highlander with a tremendous shock of red hair came up to the carriage.

"And is this the young leddy, Master Jack?" said Red Angus to young Escomb.

Both Lilian and Harold's friend felt awkward. Mr. Wilson answered the question.

"Yes, Angus," he said. "Miss Holt has come all the way from London, and we mean to give her a good time while she's here."

"I'm at your service, sorr," observed the Highlandman, touching his forelock.

"Come over to-morrow at ten o'clock. If the morning is fine, we're going to Pladda in the lugsail."

"I'm your man, sorr," said the Highlandman, with a peculiar look in his eye.

"Good-night, Angus."

"Good-night, your Honour."

"I don't like that man, George," said Mrs. Wilson, when the cart had turned the corner "He bears you a grudge—I'm sure of it."

"Oh, Stewart's all right when he's sober," rejoined Mr. Wilson. "Of course I couldn't have him as gamekeeper any longer, after the way he disgraced himself at Lamlash Fair."

"You had best be careful," said Lilian's aunt, shaking her head. "These people are

revengeful. I wouldn't trust myself in an open boat with Red Angus if I were you."

"Oh, he's safe enough," said Mr. Wilson. "Here we are at the Lodge."

How wild it looked! Situated right on the edge of the precipice, white gulls circled about its chimneys, while far below breakers were grinding on the beach. But inside all was snug and warm, and Lilian was not sorry to find herself at the end of her journey.

"No, thank you," said young Escomb to Mrs. Wilson, in reply to her invitation. "I won't come in to-night. You'll want to have Miss Holt to yourselves."

"We'll look for you to-morrow morning, anyhow, Jack," said Lilian's uncle. "If you meet Harold coming up, tell him to look sharp. What do you think of the boy, Lil?" asked Mr. Wilson, as Escomb turned up the path.

"Such a question to ask, George," exclaimed his wife. "Come away, and I'll show you your room, dear. Never mind your uncle."

It was a cosy little room in the turret, overlooking the sea. The Firth stretched away for thirty miles to the Ayrshire coast. Southwards, out in mid-channel, Lil could see the Ailsa light. Six times it twinkled, then disappeared. Six times again, then another pause.

"Now have you everything you want, Lil?" asked Mrs. Wilson kindly.

"Yes, Aunt. What a dear little room this is."

"I thought you'd like it. We'll see what dreams you have, with the surf beating all night below your windows."

But after the long day's travel, Lilian slept soundly. When Bessie, the maid, called her next morning, the sun was shining, and on looking out, she could hear shouts from the rocks below.

"It's master and the boys," remarked Bessie. "They always bathe before breakfast."

Hurrying through her dressing, Lilian was down in time to greet Mr. Wilson and her cousins as they entered the hall.

"Well done, Lil," cried her uncle. "I was afraid we shouldn't see you till lunch. You'll do for the Highlands if you can rise early. It's the best part of the day here. What about her box, Harold? I forgot to ask you, sir."

But this was a sore point with Lilian's cousin. Fortunately the gong sounded at that moment, and they all went in to breakfast.

It was scarcely over when Red Angus appeared with word that the sailing boat was ready, awaiting Mr. Wilson's orders.

"How's the wind?" asked Lilian's uncle.

"South by east, sorr."

"Steady, Angus?"

"Yes, your Honour."

"Now have a care, George," said Mrs. Wilson, as the boys followed Red Angus down to the beach. "I feel uneasy about that man."

"Nonsense, Mary. Ah, Escomb, here you are," for just at that moment Harold's friend appeared at the bow window. "The boys have just gone down," said Mr. Wilson. "Will you show Miss Holt the way, while I get my cape."

Jack Escomb's duty was not confined to showing Lilian the path. It was so steep and tortuous, he had to assist her more than once. At length they reached the rocks where Harold and Fred were waiting.

"Ever been in a lugsail before, Lil?" asked Harold.

"No."

"You'll be beastly sick," remarked her cousin, with a grin.

"Nonsense, Harold!" exclaimed Jack Escomb. "He owes you one for that joke about the box," he whispered to Lilian.

There was a bark behind, and Mr. Wilson came up, followed by Adam, the collie.

"Are you ready, Angus?" he asked.

"Yes, sorr. And it's a fine morning the young leddy is going to have for her sail."

"Yes, I think so. Down, Adam, down," said Mr. Wilson, as the collie began to growl ominously at Red Angus.

"Keep the beast back, sorr," cried the Highlandman. "He and I are no sich guid freens. As ye weel ken!"

"Down, Adam," said Lilian's uncle, for the dog, a superb creature, had worked himself up into a fury, and was like to spring at Stewart. Mr. Wilson helped his niece into the lugsail, and the boys took their places in the bow.

"Hullo, father," asked Fred, "is Adam to come?"

"No. Go home, sir, go home."

"Hoist up the sail, Master Harold," cried Red Angus. "Steady, lads."

Throwing their weight on the rope, Jack Escomb and Harold raised the canvas to the wind, and the smack began to move.

"Go home, sir. Go home, Adam," shouted Mr. Wilson.

The collie had run along the ledge, keeping pace with the smack.

"Go home, sir, go home."

But just as they were turning the Point, old Adam, guided perhaps by instinct, leapt from the rock, and sprang right into the boat as it swept by.

"Quiet," said his master, gripping him by the collar, and making him lie down.

Red Angus gave the animal an angry glance. The dog returned the look with interest. Its big eyes rolled, it lashed its tail, it was eager to grip the man by the throat.

"Quiet, Adam, quiet!" said Mr. Wilson.

Half a mile from land the wind began to freshen. As they turned the Point and came in sight of Bennan Head, a fierce gust almost made the boat heel over.

"Is it quite safe, uncle?" asked Lilian.

"Perfectly, dear. Angus knows his work."

"Ay, ay, sorr," said the boatman, with a strange smile on his under lip.

"Down, Adam, down!" cried Lilian's uncle, as the dog again threatened to spring at the man he hated.

"There's the lighthouse," called Fred from his post at the bow.

Peeping under the sail, Lilian could see the two white towers with their glass turrets and shining brass roofs, and the lighthouse keeper's dwelling.

"Are you going round the bar, Angus, or straight across?" asked Mr. Wilson.

"Across, sorr," said Stewart.

"Won't it be calmer inside the bar?"

"A'm thinkin' no," said Red Angus, in a surly tone. "May-be ye'll just leave it in ma ain hauns, sorr."

"Certainly, Stewart."

All the same, his wife's suspicions flashed across Mr. Wilson's mind, and from that moment he kept a sharp eye on the helmsman. The sea was running high, and the Pladda current made the spot rather dangerous. But Red Angus knew the place. A hundred times he had taken the lugsail across in worse weather. With a skilled hand he brought the boat to within forty yards of the island.

"See the landing, Fred?" called Mr. Wilson.

"Yes!" cried all the boys together.

"A bit more to the left, Angus," shouted Harold.

"Ay, ay," grunted the helmsman.

"Look out, there's a squall coming," said Mr. Wilson a moment later.

To escape the spray, Lilian had seated herself at the bottom of the boat beside old Adam. Peeping over the gunwale, she could see the gust knocking off the heads of the breakers not a mile away.

"Look out, Angus," cried Mr. Wilson again. "Run her straight for the landing."

"Ay, ay, sorr."

Was it an error of judgment? Was it in malice? The squall burst over their heads.

"Up with the helm," cried Lilian's uncle, springing to his feet.

There was a fiendish yell. Red Angus turned the rudder the wrong way. The smack shivered to her keel; the next instant she was swamped.

When the boat capsized, Jack Escomb made a grip at Lilian. He caught her by the arm, and both of them were flung into the water together. Diving clear of the boat, Escomb brought up Miss Holt a few yards from the smack. The little craft was tossing keel uppermost among the waves. Jack remembered the sailor's maxim "stick to the ship." A few strokes brought him alongside.

"Hold on," he shouted to Lilian, above the roar of the waves.

She gripped hard with both hands. Raising himself on to the keel, Escomb dragged his new friend out of the water. Then brushing the spray from their eyes, they looked round for their companions.

A shout greeted them from the right. Mr. Wilson had just risen to the surface.

"Here you are," cried Jack, stretching out a hand.

"Thank Heaven!" exclaimed Lilian's uncle, swinging himself up. "I thought that rogue had done for me."

"What rogue, father?" asked Harold, as he clambered up with Fred on the other side.

"Why, Red Angus, to be sure. He grappled with me as the boat went over, and we both went down together. The rascal had his fingers on my windpipe, and I thought it was all up with me. Then I remembered the old trick, boys. I stuck my knee right into his scamp down. I never heard of such a thing before."

Whistling loudly, he called the dog by name, but the collie stuck to his victim. Reversing the natural instinct of animals, instead of saving Red Angus and bringing him alongside, old Adam did all he could to keep the wretched man from rising to the surface. Did he recognise his guilt, and refuse to spare him? Did instinct bid him avenge the attempt, the dastardly attempt, which had been made on his master's life? Anyhow, old Adam, refusing

"WITH A COIL OF ROPE IN THEIR HANDS, MCKECHNIE THE LIGHTHOUSE KEEPER, AND HIS SON, PREPARED TO RESCUE THOSE CLINGING TO THE SMACK."—(*p.* 868.)

chest, and gave him one straight from the shoulder. It caught him between the eyes just in the nick of time. He loosened his hold. I sprang away, and struck out for the top."

"See!" exclaimed Lilian, pointing to the waves, "what's that over there?"

"Why, Adam, to be sure," cried her uncle. "But what has he got between his paws?"

"I'll be hanged if it's not that Red Angus," cried Jack Escomb.

"Look," said Mr. Wilson, "he's holding the to hear his master's voice, kept Red Angus under water. Whenever Stewart tried to come to the surface, the animal swam right over the spot where the helmsman's head should appear. Twice, thrice, four times this occurred.

"Look after Lil, boys," cried Mr. Wilson.

"Let me go," cried Jack Escomb and Harold.

But before they were ready, Lilian's uncle had sprung from his place of safety, and was cleaving a path through the waves.

It was a wonderful sight. McKechnie, the

lighthouse keeper, and his son had come running down to the rocks. With a coil of rope in their hands, they prepared to rescue those clinging to the smack. But between them and it was this conflict in the water; Red Angus struggling for his life, the dog determined to avenge his master, and Mr. Wilson himself now within a stroke or two of the spot.

"Adam," he shouted, "home, sir, home."

A hand rose imploringly above the waves. Mr. Wilson caught it. With a growl, the collie swam ashore.

"Well done, the old dad!" cried Harold and Fred, waving their hands.

McKechnie and his son threw the rope. Mr. Wilson caught it, and in a few moments Lilian's uncle and Red Angus were pulled ashore.

But Lilian herself and the three boys were in a perilous position. The breakers dashed over the capsized boat. Jack Escomb supported her with his arm, and they all held on for dear life, expecting every moment to be hurled back into the sea.

Suddenly there was a crash. The smack had struck a sunken rock.

"Steady!" called McKechnie, the lighthouse keeper. "We're coming."

Handing over Red Angus to McKechnie's son, Lilian's uncle and the lighthouse keeper came running along the ledge of rock, which brought them within ten yards of the stone on which the boat had grounded.

"Catch," cried the keeper.

The rope fell on Harold's side. He missed it.

"Again," shouted the lighthouse-man.

This time Jack caught it, but they would need to make the crossing one by one.

Lashing the rope round Lilian, Escomb and Harold took a firm hold of their end, and gave the signal. Slowly and steadily Lilian was pulled through the water, and Mr. Wilson raised her on to the ledge.

"Are you hurt, Lil?" he asked anxiously.

"Not a bit," answered his niece.

"Come, boys," shouted Mr. Wilson, "swim for it. You're wet through already, and an extra dip won't matter."

With a cheer, the three sprang into the water, and Lilian's uncle and the lighthouse keeper assisted them up the rocks.

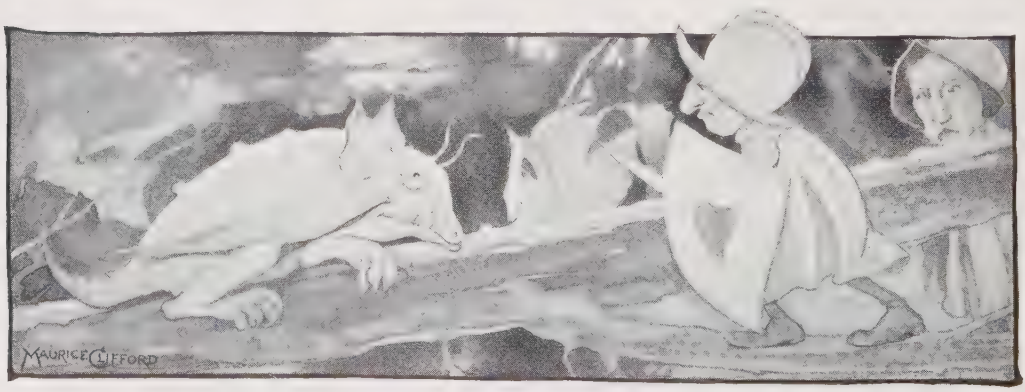
"Noo come awa tae the hoose," said Andrew McKechnie. "Ye'll pe frae Dippin Lodge, sir, a'm thinkin'?"

"Yes," replied Mr. Wilson.

"The wife wull pit ye a' tae bed till yere claes dry."

"And what about this rascal, sir?" asked Jack Escomb, pointing to where Stewart stood, dripping but repentant. For the man realised that his master had saved his life. "Shall we signal the Coastguard to send the Police?"

"No," said Mr. Wilson in his most cheery voice. "Angus and I will be good friends in future. If Lilian can forgive him for spoiling one of her best frocks, surely her uncle can find it in his heart to forgive him too."



A CRITICAL MOMENT.

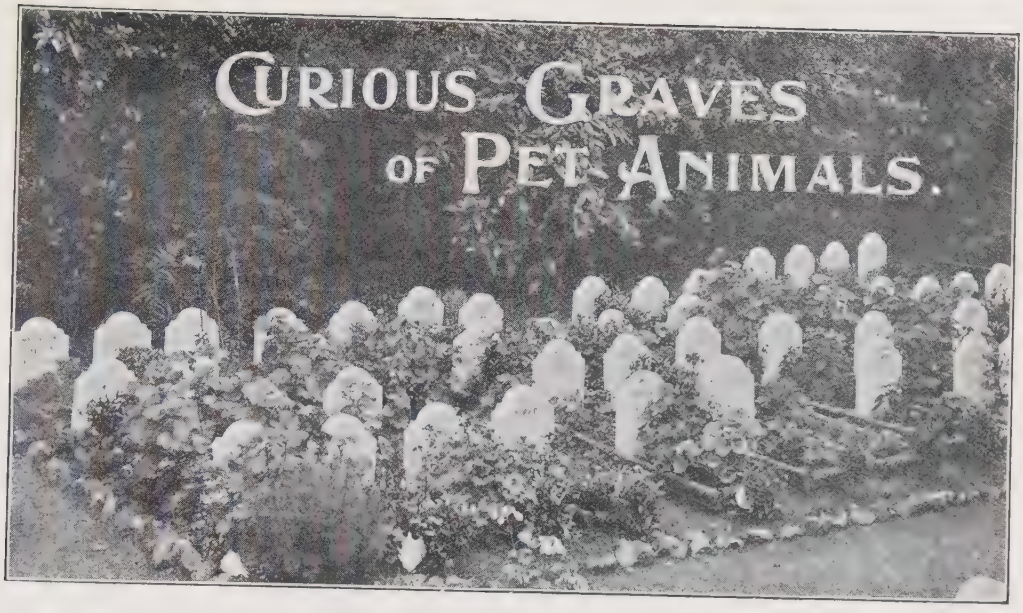


Photo. Thos. Fall.

THE DOGS' CEMETERY IN KENSINGTON GARDENS.

BY GEORGE A. WADE.

THERE are few people who realise to what a great extent the favourite animals of famous people have been commemorated by their owners. Not many, for instance, know that in Kensington Gardens is a ground devoted entirely to the interment of the pet dogs of wealthy and aristocratic people. Here one sees long rows of graves, each with its small memorial stone, and decorated with plants or flowers. In these graves lie dogs whose devotion in life their owners have rewarded by burying them decently and commemorating their names. On the tombstones are engraven the date of the pet's death, its name, and here and there a sentence that betrays a deep affection for the dead favourite. There are about two hundred graves in the cemetery, and each dog is buried in a little coffin.

The names of some of the dogs buried can be easily read on the photograph with the aid of a magnifying-glass. We notice such as "Boxer," "Little Tippo," "Faithful Old Nigger," "My darling Bella," "Topsey," "Dear Floss," and "Isaac." The Duke of Cambridge's "Little Prince" lies in the cemetery. One stone tells us that the dog was a "loving friend," and another that the animal was a "dear faithful companion of many climes." Many an afternoon have I lingered in this cemetery and tried to imagine all the histories, not only of dog life, but even of human life, that lie hidden in these graves. It is a quaint spot this, in the heart of London, and not without its interest and its useful lessons.

Dogs were always the favourite pets of Queen Victoria, from her girlhood upwards. She never forgot to commemorate these favourites on their deaths, nor to pay a loving tribute to their affection for her. At Frogmore, near Windsor Castle, she had a portion of the gardens marked off and set apart for the graves of her four-footed favourites. Here one can wander over a wide area and come across constantly some memorial of a pet dog or horse. The graves are not placed in any regular plan; they are here and there over an extended space. The photograph we give shows two or three of these graves. The curious reader will notice the solid square slab placed above each. This slab, usually made of

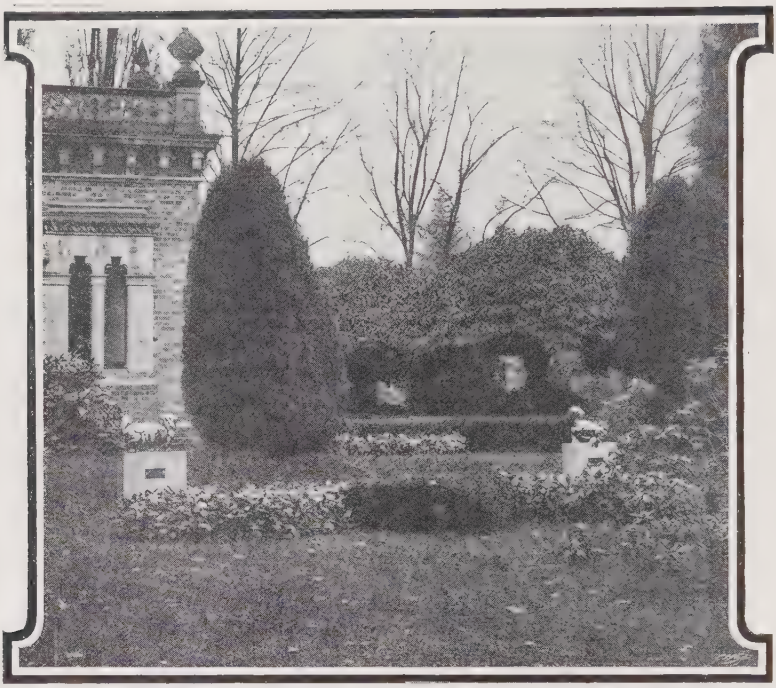


Photo. Russell and Sons, Windsor

THE GRAVES OF TWO OF QUEEN VICTORIA'S FAVOURITE DOGS IN THE GROUNDS OF FROGMORE.

granite, has, as a general rule, the name of the occupant of the tomb carved upon it.

As is well known, most of the favourite animals of the late Queen were kept at Frogmore during their lifetime, and here their mistress often went to visit them.

At Balmoral there is a memorial to Queen Victoria's old favourite, "Noble." Her Majesty thought so much of this dog that, when he died, she had his grave surmounted by a carved stone, and a sculpture of him which is lifelike. She herself composed the inscription for the stone, which runs as follows :—

NOBLE.

For more than 13 years
the favourite collie,
And dear and faithful
companion of

QUEEN VICTORIA.

Died at Balmoral, 18th of
September, 1887.

Aged 16 years.

"'Noble' by name, 'Noble' by nature, too;
Faithful companion, sympathetic, true."

The King and Queen Alexandra, when they resided at Sandringham, as Prince and Princess of Wales, set aside a spot in the grounds as sacred to departed favourites. The photo-

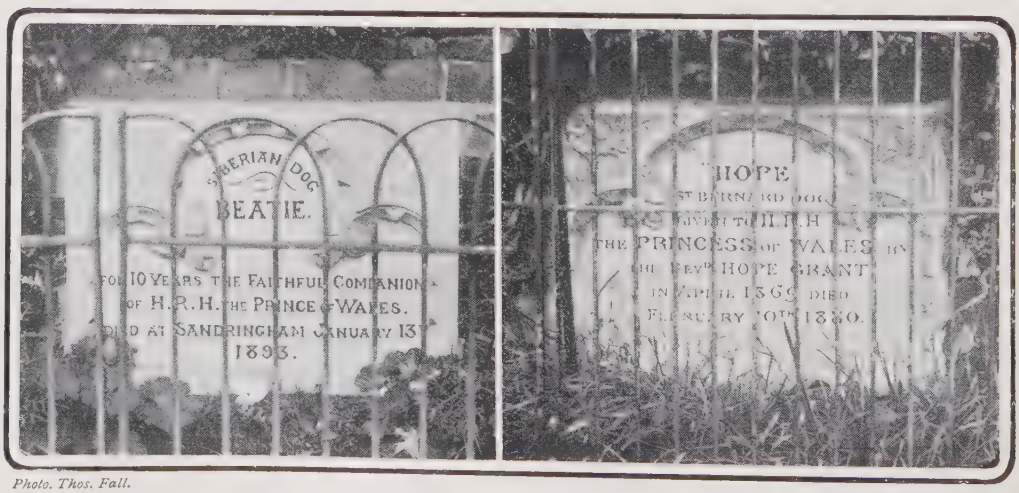


Photo. Thos. Fall.

THE GRAVES OF TWO DOGS, FOR A LONG TIME THE FAITHFUL COMPANIONS OF THE KING AND QUEEN.

These dogs—a Siberian and St. Bernard—were buried at Sandringham. The inscriptions engraven on their tombs can easily be read.

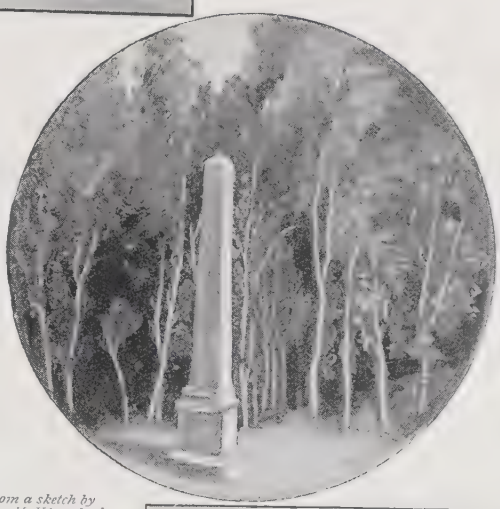
UNDER THIS MONUMENT THE PET DOG OF HENRY CLAY, THE FAMOUS AMERICAN, LIES BURIED WITH HIM.

graphs we publish here show the graves of two pet dogs that bear touching inscriptions.

A notable tomb of a dog is that at Windsor, where is buried the animal better known to our grandfathers than to us, under the name of "Boatswain." This dog's epitaph on the tombstone is copied almost literally from that written by Lord Byron upon the grave of his favourite Newfoundland at Newstead Abbey. Strangely enough Byron's dog was also named "Boatswain," and lovers of Byron will not need to be told how many lines he wrote at one time or another in that dog's praise. But the "Boatswain" buried at Windsor was an even more notable figure in the early part of the century, for he was taken into favour on account of his size and prowess by the then Prince of Wales in 1803, and later saved the life of Napoleon from drowning at Elba. After this the Prince, who had previously presented him to Beau Brummel, wished to regain possession of the noble animal, and bought him back. A little house was built specially for him at Windsor, and here he died in 1815. The Prince Regent had this tablet placed to his memory :—

> "Near this spot are deposited the remains of one who possessed beauty without vanity, strength without insolence, courage without ferocity; all the virtues of man without his vices.
>
> "This praise, which would be unmeaning flattery if inscribed over human ashes, is but a just tribute to the memory of 'Boatswain,' a dog, who was born at Newfoundland, May, 1803, and died at Windsor, 18th of November, 1815."

It may, I think, be allowed, that this tribute written by Byron is the



From a sketch by V. Kingsford.

THE OBELISK RAISED TO THE MEMORY OF A PET HORSE IN A PRIVATE FIELD NEAR STROUD.

THE GRAVES OF TWO PET HORSES, NEAR LEWES.

Raised to their memory by Mrs. Rickman.

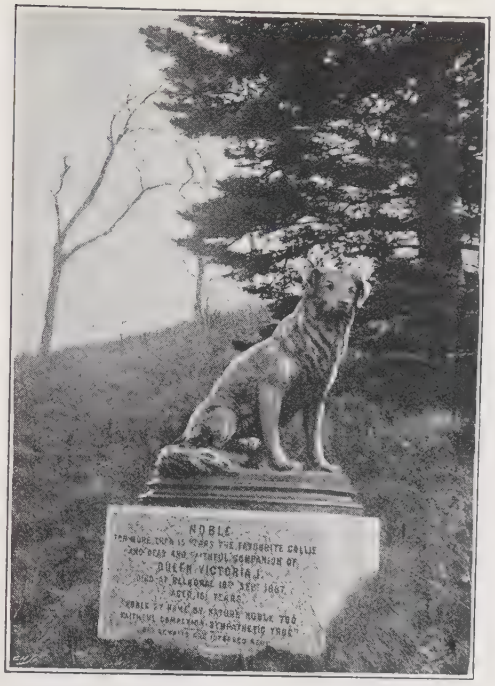
finest ever engraved upon the tomb of a pet animal.

Many ladies have raised memorials to favourite horses. One of the most remarkable of such monuments that I recall is a tall column standing solitary near some woods just outside Stroud in Gloucestershire. The column is placed upon a plinth, and commemorates "Bob," a pet horse. Bob could frequently be seen in Stroud streets doing a little shopping on his own account, for when his owner did not want, or could not contrive, to go personally into the town for articles needed at home, Bob used to carry a pair of panniers, containing a written list of goods required, and set off himself to do the business. This was always most satisfactorily performed, for the shopkeepers, knowing what the sensible creature was after, would place the articles needed within the panniers. And woe to any one who tried to get them out before the horse reached home! Bob's heels had small mercy on such! Bob lived to a great age, his tombstone recording the fact that he had passed his forty-second year before death came to him. It was on the occasion of his death that the family he had served so well, unwilling that the good qualities of the fine old steed should pass from memory, raised this monument over his grave.

One of the most interesting among memorials of favourite pets is the monument raised by Mrs. Rickman of Lewes. Mrs. Rickman is devoted to horses; she makes it a point that when any one of her pets dies it should have a worthy tomb. The field near where her house stands has been given over to old friends among horses whose life-work is done, and here they graze in undisturbed comfort. When these favourites die they are buried in the same spot. In one case, a large mound has

THE TOMB OF A KNIGHT AND LADY IN COXWOLD CHURCH: AT THE FOOT CAN BE SEEN THE FIGURE OF A LARGE STAG, THE PET OF LADY BELAYSE.

been raised above the equine occupant, and a spiral pathway goes from the bottom of it to the top. As the mound is a height of something like twenty-five feet or so, it stands out as a conspicuous object for some distance round, though few people who did not know it would associate it with the burial-place of a horse. In another portion of the field are several graves of horses enclosed in iron railings. The graves are well kept, their owner visiting them constantly.



THE MONUMENT RAISED AT BALMORAL BY QUEEN VICTORIA TO THE MEMORY OF A FAVOURITE COLLIE, NOBLE.

In my travels through England, I have come across two very curious instances of pets commemorated on tombstones, together with their owners—instances that are certainly worth mentioning in this article. The pets chosen show that in past days ladies were not content with keeping dogs and cats alone as favourites in their homes. In an ancient and very interesting church in North Yorkshire I came across a fine tomb of a knight and his lady. Their full-length figures are sculptured recumbent on the lid of the tomb, and at the foot of the lid is carved a large figure of a stag, upon whose right side the feet of both the knight and the lady are resting. I was much interested in this curious representation, and I made a few inquiries as to its reason for being there. The tomb dates back to the beginning of 1603, and appears to belong to the old family of Belayse. The lady depicted on its slab seems to have had in later life

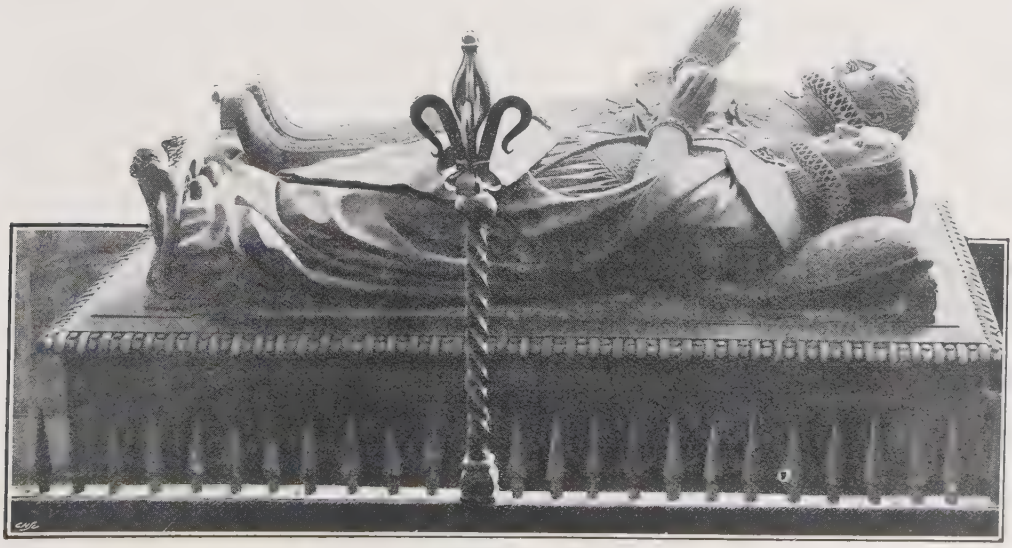


Photo. Russell & Sons, Windsor.

THE PET MONKEY ON THE GRAVE OF THE EARL AND COUNTESS OF LINCOLN.

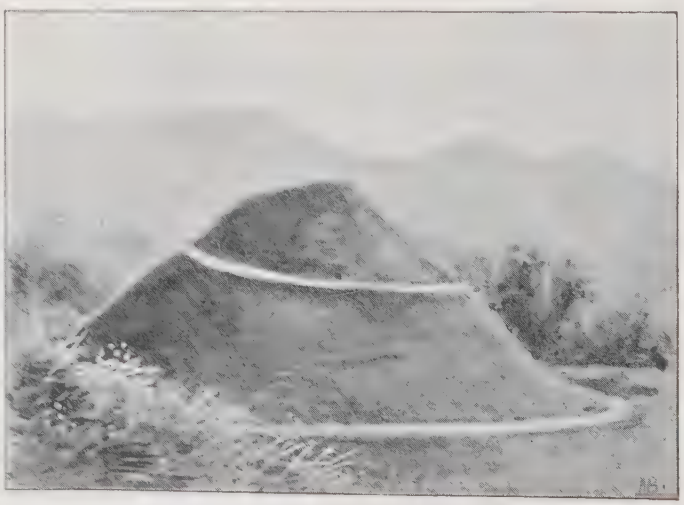
This tomb is one o the finest in St. George's Chapel, Windsor.

a favourite stag, to which she became so much attached that it was sculptured with herself on the tomb after her death. The stag has been badly treated, however, by time and irreverent hands, for one of its horns has been broken off, and its beauty of carving much marred by marks and scars.

The second instance of which I spoke is even more curious, for the pet animal to whom the memorial has been raised was a monkey! It stands at the foot of the recumbent figure of its mistress, who died just four hundred years ago. In St. George's Chapel at Windsor, as perfect now as when it was first sculptured, is a beautiful monument erected to the memory of an Earl and Countess of Lincoln of the Middle Ages. At the feet of the lady is carved in stone a pet monkey attached by a chain. It is generally believed by those who know the history of these tombs that the monkey was buried with the Countess of Lincoln of whom it was a close favourite, and that its bones rest in this tomb with her own and those of her husband.

Two more curious examples of graves of pet animals there are that I must mention here. One is that of a famous dog which was, by its master's special desire, buried with him. Their grave is in the celebrated cemetery in Kentucky where lie buried the remains of Henry Clay, a man whom, had he lived, many expected to see in the President's chair at Washington. A pet dog of Henry Clay was buried with him in this grave, the noble monument here shown doing duty for the dog as well as for its famous master. Perhaps no other dog has so fine a monument.

My last instance is one told me by the sexton of a Yorkshire village during my visit to his churchyard many years ago. Lord Dacre, who died fighting bravely for the Lancastrians at Towton, in 1461, directed that, if he were killed in the battle, his favourite war-horse should be buried in the same grave with him. He was killed in battle, and, according to his wishes, when his interment took place in Saxton Churchyard after the battle, a tremendous grave was dug, and in it the noble warrior was buried, seated upright on his horse. This is, I believe, the only case on record in this country where a man was buried seated on his horse. For long years reflections were cast upon the accuracy of this tradition, but some few years ago, whilst excavations for new graves were being made close by the reputed burial-place of Lord Dacre, the pick of a digger struck into a great bone, and upon further search being made, the skull of a big horse was brought to the surface. As this was found almost at the very spot under which the body of Lord Dacre was said to lie, it was accepted as confirmation of the tradition, the more so that the skull was found to be standing vertically in the soil. The skull was replaced carefully in its original position, and the excavation filled up. An enclosure of iron rails was provided for the grave of this nobleman who sleeps in the company of his pet horse.



TWO FAVOURITE HORSES ARE BURIED HERE ON THE SUSSEX DOWNS.

THE TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD—IV.

HER FIRST LOVE AFFAIR AND QUARREL.

From an original Drawing by F. Y. Cory.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

SYNOPSIS.

PHILIPPA, MADGE, THEO and HOPE, are the four daughters of Edgar Charrington, a man of exceptional genius. He dies, leaving to his girls and boys the slender legacy of £2,000 with which to equip themselves for the battle of life. The girls have inherited their father's genius; Hope is an accomplished musician; Madge a clever artist; Theo a budding author. Philippa, the eldest girl, is the housekeeper. They come to London, against the advice of Mrs. Loftus, their father's sister, and take a small flat in Tottenham Court Road, and there expend their capital in securing a good start in their various professions. Stephen goes to a solicitor's firm, Barney into an insurance office, and Madge to the Slade School. Though they become disillusioned of their hopes of a speedy success, the girls greatly enjoy life in the flat. Below them lives a crusty bachelor, an author of some note, whom the girls nickname the "Hermit" and treat with much scorn and derision. The Hermit complains to Philippa of annoying tricks played on him by Barney, whereupon Philippa forces the lad to apologise to him. From that date they and the Hermit become firm friends.

Hope goes to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Loftus at their shooting-box in Norfolk. There she succeeds in awakening in her cousin Avice an interest in poor girls in need of country air, whom Avice invites to a cottage on the estate. Hope meets there a Mr. Ralph Merrilies, who is unusually kind to her. He advises her to organise an entertainment for the amusement of children. Hope would greatly like to be friends with him, but Truda Bennett, a vivacious member of the house-party, has warned her that she is "especially interested" in Ralph. Ralph asks Hope when she is leaving if he may call on her at the flat. Hope, thinking always of Truda, puts him off with an excuse.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AND so the weeks went by, and the eventful evening came round at last. Hope attired herself in the white dress in which she looked charming enough to enrapture any audience, seated herself in a cab, and drove away through the crowded streets, a poor little trembling Columbus going forth to discover new worlds! At Belgrave Square an awning was erected over the doorway, a babel of noise filled the air, and the big rooms were crowded with dainty little forms dancing about on long white legs, and groups of boys in Eton jackets, standing by themselves, and looking bored and superior. Mrs. Welsby rustled forward to meet Hope with a glance and a smile, which made the girl's heart leap with painful remembrance, seeming unfeignedly rejoiced at her arrival.

"Oh Miss Charrington, so charmed to see you! We have been playing games for an hour, and I am quite exhausted! What exacting little wretches they are! I will take them into the drawing-room and get them seated, and will you begin at once, please! I have really come to the end of my resources."

She was so smiling and friendly that Hope's shyness disappeared on the spot; she helped to marshal the children to their seats, and took her stand on the little platform by the piano as the last few rows of chairs were being filled. A hasty glance around had discovered no sign of Mr. Merrilies, but his absence, bitter disappointment though it was, brought an increase of self-confidence for the task ahead. Experience in the Mission Rooms had shown that not a moment must be lost in engaging wandering attention, so no sooner had the last little white frock taken

her seat, then she clapped her hands to call for silence, and looking smilingly around, began her story:—

"Once upon a very long time ago, there lived a King and Queen, who had the most beautiful little Princess daughter that was ever seen. Her true name was Marie Theresa Louisa Alberta Maud Victoria Patricia Josephine, but as it was a very busy country, where the people were always going to war, and having discussions among themselves, no one had time to call her by so many names, except on Sundays, and Bank Holidays, and Christmas Day. On ordinary working days she was called 'Princess Chrystal,' because her eyes were so clear and sparkling; her laugh was like a chime of bells. She had seven fairy godmothers, and they all came to her christening, and brought her the most wonderful presents you can imagine. I am going to sing you a song which tells all about the godmothers and their presents, and I want you to listen very carefully to the first verse, and to join in the chorus when I hold up my hand."

She stepped down from the platform to seat herself at the piano, and even the superior gentlemen in Eton jackets were obliged to join in with the rest, when they discovered that the words were set to the well-known rollicking tune of "Seven Little Nigger Boys!" Though the story began in the orthodox fashion, its development was decidedly original, and the numerous songs and choruses prevented attention from wandering. When it came to the turn of the Giant with his "Fe-fo-fum," the boys in the back rows stamped with their feet to emphasize the words, and it was the prettiest thing in the world to see Hope shaking with laughter even as she sang, and nodding encouragement with her golden head.

"Pretty dear!" said the hostess to someone who stood well back in the shadow of the doorway, "how *blasé* you men are. The idea of describing her to me in that callous manner! I could sit and look at her all night!"

"Very pleasant for you, but if I might make a suggestion, this must be tiring work for her. When Princess Chrystal is safely married I'll take her downstairs, and administer refreshment. As I suggested this entertainment, I am anxious to hear how it is catching on, and I haven't seen her since she left The Shanty."

Mrs. Welsby looked up keenly, but the dark face beside her was as inscrutable as ever. It was not like Ralph to trouble himself about a girl, still less to volunteer excuses for his actions, and she watched curiously to see the meeting between the pair at the conclusion of the story-telling.

"You!" cried Hope in astonishment as she made her way past the applauding children, and came out into the refreshing coolness of the hall. She stood still, looking at him with wide, startled eyes. "I never saw you. I thought you were not here!"

"I kept out of sight on purpose, in case it might make you nervous to see someone whom you knew. Now will you come downstairs and let me get you some refreshment after your arduous labours? I am sure you must need it."

Hope looked round with uncertain glance. "I—I think I do, but will it be right. Do you think I *ought?*"

"Right! Ought! Miss Charrington, what do you mean? Take my arm now, at any rate, and explain when you are comfortably seated. A matter of conscience cannot be discussed in this deafening noise. There is a grandfather's chair in the corner of the dining-room, which I can confidently recommend!"

It was like a revival of old times to be waited upon with such care and consideration, and being ordered not to speak a word until she had been fed and rested, Hope sipped her wine, and ate sandwiches in a dream of happiness. Mr. Merrilies had not forgotten her question, however, and presently she found herself called upon for an explanation.

"I'm so new to this business that I don't quite know 'my place'!" she said, smiling at him in mischievous fashion. "Last Tuesday I had my first social engagement. I arrived at the hour appointed, and found that the children were dancing, and that a conjurer was engaged as well as myself. We waited our turn together, the conjurer and I, in a dreary little room, with a dreary little gas fire that sent all its warmth up the chimney. We waited nearly an hour and no one came near us, and it was very cold. We talked and talked, and he showed me tricks to keep up my spirits, for he saw how nervous I was."

Reggie Blake would have said "Happy Conjurer!" but Ralph Merrilies was not given to compliments. He knitted his brows, and inquired brusquely—

"What sort of a fellow was he? A decent sort?"

"At first I thought he was detestable. He was not—to put it mildly—*quite* a gentleman, and he was very familiar. I was very stiff and haughty for a few minutes, and then I began to reflect that after all we were in the same position,

trying to earn our living, and that if I snubbed him I should be as great a snob as the woman who had cared so little for our comfort. I was quite nice after that, and he really was a dear little vulgar thing. He had an invalid wife at home—and he spoke so tenderly of her—and two little conjurer boys who knew his tricks almost as well as he did himself, and a delicate daughter for whom I have plans in the future. We exchanged addresses, and he volunteered to find me engagements, and thought we might do a very good "jint business!"

Hope laughed at the remembrance, but Ralph frowned more fiercely than before, and bending forward with his chin supported on his hands, stared fixedly at her face.

"Do you know I hate to hear of your having such experiences—of your having to work at all. I wish I had never suggested it! Do you mean to say you *enjoy* it yourself?"

"I enjoy it very much when I am well started, and see all the dear little faces looking at me, but I hate it beforehand, and am, oh, so frightened and nervous. And I love getting the money! I paid a coal bill yesterday with my very own earnings, and I never enjoyed anything more in my life."

He pressed his lips together and was silent, and when he spoke again it was to start an entirely new subject.

"How are you going home to-night?"

"In a four-wheeler. I shall get the man to whistle for one presently."

"Alone?"

"Of course. I am a working woman, Mr. Merrilies. I have to take care of myself."

"Well, there is no need to-night, at any rate. I shall go with you and see you safely home. If you won't let me come inside, I shall sit on the box! It is for you to decide!"

The pale, disconcerted glance which the girl turned on him in reply would have depressed a more confident lover than himself, for the suggestion had awakened Hope to the danger of her position, and filled her tender conscience with dread, lest she had already been disloyal to her vow. How much she would have enjoyed the prolonged *tête-à-tête* can be well imagined, but there were half-a-dozen reasons which made it inadvisable. Mrs. Welsby would naturally prefer her brother to remain until the end of the evening; it would be discourteous to accept his escort and still refuse an invitation to the flat; yet such an invitation once granted might mean unlimited suffering in the future! Hope was still hesitating over a reply, when a reprieve came in the shape of a summons from her hostess, who beckoned to her brother from the doorway, and cried pleadingly: "Ralph! can you possibly go upstairs? The conjurer wants to begin, and the children are scrambling over the chairs in the most hopeless fashion. Do go to the rescue, like a good fellow!"

The "good fellow's" expression was the reverse of amiable as he prepared to obey. A low "I'll see you later, then. That is settled!" reached Hope's ears, then Mrs. Welsby rustled forward, and took possession of the vacant seat.

In the five minutes' conversation which followed, Mrs. Welsby was all that was gracious and charming, but Hope had an uncomfortable conviction that she was not altogether pleased with the *tête-à-tête* which she had interrupted, and that she was closely scrutinising her. And then came an unexpected blow. After the usual compliments, and a promise to recommend the entertainment to her friends, Mrs. Welsby said blandly:—

"And now we must not detain you any longer. You look tired, and must be longing to rest. I am going to ask you to do me a favour—to take charge of a little girl who is crying to go home, and who will not be sent for for another hour! It will not be much out of your way, and you would be in time to stop the carriage coming. I will send for your cloak, and John shall whistle for a four-wheeler!"

Poor Hope! poor, miserable, deluded Hope! A minute before she had been so wise, so prudent, so satisfied that she preferred to decline Ralph's offer, but now that escape was made easy, a wave of bitter disappointment, of wild, incredulous rebellion took the place of the former calm. She searched desperately for an excuse, an evasion, but short of confessing the previous engagement, there was nothing to be said. Theo would have been equal to the occasion. Madge would even have enjoyed it, but Hope found herself murmuring polite acquiescence, and five minutes later, driving away from the door, as miserable a young woman as could be found in the length and breadth of London. The little girl was still crying weakly, the big girl hugged her and cried in sympathy. "He will think I did it on purpose," she sobbed to herself. "He will never want to speak to me again!"

Ten minutes later, Ralph Merrilies asked his sister the whereabouts of Miss Charrington, for whom he had been seaching in vain. "She has gone home," was the calm reply. "Drove off in a cab directly after you went upstairs."

The glance which accompanied the reply was keenly observant, for though Mrs. Welsby was less worldly-minded than most women of her class, it did not coincide with her plans that her brother should fall in love with a girl who was working for her living. She wondered if he would show signs of disappointment, but Ralph had his feelings well under control, and gave no visible signs of the blow which her words had inflicted.

"The second time!" he said sternly to himself. "The second rebuff. That ought to be enough for any fellow. Poor little girl, her life is hard enough as it is. I'm a brute if I worry her any longer!"

CHAPTER XIX.

A YEAR after the Charringtons had taken possession of their flat, the girls sat in conclave, and reviewed the situation. Philippa "submitted" her accounts with the usual unpleasant results, for those who had nothing to do with the management were horrified at their amount, groaned over the total sum, and wondered "how it had gone!" until the goaded housekeeper was fain to turn the tables, and inquire into the doings of her critics. That brought them quickly enough to their knees, for in truth the report was far from rose-coloured.

"HOPE, LOOKING SMILINGLY AROUND, BEGAN HER STORY:—'THERE LIVED A KING AND QUEEN.'"—(*p.* 877).

"I have made a decided improvement," said Theo drily. "My manuscripts are now refused with a written acknowledgment instead of a printed slip! In two cases I have even been asked to submit further efforts. I worked for nearly a month on one story for Mr. Hammond, and he said it was crude. I wrote another in one afternoon, and he said it was 'charming, but not suitable for his magazine.' I have sent it to three other editors since then, and the unanimity of opinion is most impressive. I gathered together all my rejected addresses, and offered them to a publisher. He said that volumes of short stories had been overdone, and that—except in a few exceptional cases—they were not publishing any more. I was determined to earn money *somehow*, so I turned to children's stories, and paragraphs for penny papers. I get a sovereign each for the stories, and five shillings a page for the paragraphs. I wrote an article on "Advice to Young Authors," and it was accepted on its first journey. I also perpetrated a novelette, with detailed descriptions of the heroine's frocks, and an earl for hero. The editor accepted it, and corrected my English according to his lights. I *cringed* over the printed copy and blushed to my ears. Altogether I have amassed seventeen pounds, minus, of course, my expenses, and the fortune expended on stamps!"

"I wish I had done as well," said Hope, sadly. She was as pretty as ever, but her face was thinner, and the mischievous dimples came more rarely into sight. "I had eight 'Social Engagements' during the Christmas holidays, for four of which I have to thank my friend the conjurer. Then my market was practically closed for another year. Minnie Caldecott sang my song at Aunt Loftus's reception, and again at the Welsby's, and the publishers printed it "as sung by Miss Minnie Caldecott," just as I wished. They would not pay anything down, but promised a royalty if the sales exceeded five hundred. Last time I inquired, they had sold forty-eight copies. Oh dear! I got some transposing and copying to do, which paid rather better than making matches. I swallowed mountains of pride and prejudice, and advertised myself as an instructor of youth, the one thing I had always vowed I would not do, and I have one pupil with warts on her fingers, who snores all the while she is torturing the "Village Blacksmith." I—I always thought I was amiable before, but I have felt—I've felt *murderous* to that child. I have earned nineteen pounds, Philippa, spent five on my dress, three on my cloak, over two on cabs and gloves. Grand total for a year's effort—ten pounds sterling!"

"I've not made a cent., but I've done my best, and saints can do no more!" cried Madge, breezily. "I designed Christmas cards and composed sensible verses to be printed on them, not the — 'May all your life be bright and gay — As cloudless as a summer day!' kind of business, but reasonable good wishes, which had some chance of being fulfilled. The first firm kept them for months, and could not be induced to return them until I had written four times, and the second said that it was too late in the season to consider new designs! I have sent headings and initial letters to magazines, and have had heaps of compliments, but nothing more substantial. I have likewise had heaps of snubs at the Slade, but I bob up again like a cork after each fresh dousing, and am more determined than ever to get on, and make a name. The mistake we have made is in being too proud to begin at the beginning—Hope is the most humble-minded of the family, but she expected to become well known in one season, and to sell her song by the hundreds. Theo wanted to write for *The Casket*, and I hoped to be exhibiting before now. We must crawl down, and be content to drudge, before we soar. My figure studies still leave much to be desired, but I can caricature with the best. The other day I amused myself in the lunch hour by drawing the pupils in the life, and one of the girls carried the sketch off, and stuck it on her easel. Just then in came Pepper, as we call him—he is so horribly stinging and bitter in his criticisms—and walked straight up to look at it. Oh my heart! He was quite silent, but I saw his shoulders shaking, and when he turned round his face was red. "Whose work is this?" he asked, and I suppose guilt was written large on my expressive features, for he came up to me, and said, 'I shall have to inflict a punishment for this, Miss Charrington! I cannot have my pupils ridiculed, and their work interrupted in this manner. The punishment is—that you draw a caricature of me on the other side!'"

He put the paper on my easel, and all the girls giggled and peered round to witness my collapse. But I wasn't going to be floored by a little thing like that! He stuck his hands in his pockets and stood opposite me, and I set to work to draw him then and there. He was easy to caricature, for he has a curious sheep-dog kind of face, with two deep lines running down from the nose, humped-up shoulders, and a mop of hair. It really was like him, and what I call a *polite* caricature, so that his feelings shouldn't be hurt. He tried to

look solemn when I gave it to him, but his lips twitched, and he walked straight out of the room and took it with him. Next day when he was abusing my drawing as usual, he said, "I think you had better caricature your subjects at once. You will make far more out of them in that way than in any other!" That was quite a compliment coming from Pepper, and I've taken it to heart. After much cogitation I have evolved an idea which, with Theo's co-operation, I am going to put into action forthwith. I shan't tell you what it is until I see how I succeed, but I don't mind confessing that it is hardly high-class. We might call it the lowest rung of the ladder!"

"Be careful, dearie! Don't do anything that you would be sorry for afterwards. Promise me to be careful!" pleaded the anxious housekeeper, and Madge promised gaily, and carried Theo away into another room to talk over the new idea without further delay.

Hope sat still gazing into the fire with wistful eyes, and Philippa watching her anxiously, wondered as she had often done of late if it were only the strain of money-making which had brought such sadness into the sweet face. Hope had told her nothing of Ralph Merrilies, and indeed there was little to tell, for with the exception of two occasions when she had met him at her uncle's house, and exchanged a few commonplace sentences, he had practically dropped out of her life since the evening when he had offered his escort, and had been treated to such apparent rudeness in response. Hope had given over telling herself that a fortnight's acquaintance could not possibly influence a lifetime, for the impression was too strong to be reasoned away. The picture of the strong, dark face was imprinted on her brain; in every moment of leisure her thoughts drifted back to Ralph as the needle to the pole. The longing to see him again was sometimes so strong as to be an actual physical pain. Now she sat staring into the fire, she was reviewing her life, telling herself that love was a thing forbidden, and pondering on what remained until Philippa's fixed gaze attracting her attention, she looked up with a flickering smile.

"I was thinking, Phil! Our talk has made me think. . . . I have worked so hard this last year, and the result is so poor—so unsatisfactory!" She rose, and coming close to Philippa's side, took hold of her hand and cried with sudden passion: "Phil, I can't do it—I can't go on! I could *give* my life, I could work for nothing, gladly and cheerfully, if it were for some noble end, but I can't sell it for a mess of pottage! I can't go on smiling, and acting, and trampling on my feelings, and associating with Minnie Caldecott and her friends, for the sake of what I can make out of them! And I can't earn enough to help you. I am only a burden. I want to give it up, Phil, and devote my life to doing good. I want to enter a home for Deaconesses, and be trained for work among the poor. There is no question of money there, for you get barely enough to live on in the plainest way, but I should be doing some good."

"Sit down, Hope!" said Philippa, quietly. She waited in silence until the trembling hand lay quietly in her own, and then began her reply: "I know a girl who went to pay a visit at a country house. It was, on the face of it, merely a pleasure visit, but while there she managed to wake up a very selfish girl to the consciousness that there were other needs in the world besides her own. Later on, she gave real hard work to the carrying out of a scheme which she had suggested, and which has put fresh life into many tired workers this summer. I know a girl who has three quick-tempered, sharp-tongued sisters, and who keeps peace among them by her sweet influence. I know a girl who can make home cheerful by the exercise of her talent, and so keep a young brother happy and occupied many times when he would otherwise be roaming about in search of amusement. He is only a boy, but he thinks himself a man, and he is so easily—so easily influenced for good or bad! If that girl left her home, and her sisters' lives were made more difficult, and that poor boy went astray, would she be 'doing good'? would that be a noble action?"

"Oh, Phil!" gasped Hope, dismayed; but now Philippa in her turn was roused, and she squared her shoulders in her old determined fashion.

"I can't think what has come to girls nowadays that they must take for granted that good work must be without their own four walls! Charity begins at home, and I call it treachery to forsake your relations when they need your help. If you go away, and anything happens to Barney——"

"Phil, don't! I can't bear it. Of course I will stay if you need me, and it comforts me more than anything else to feel that I can help. You are not—not *anxious* about Barney, are you, dear?"

"Yes, I am! I hate to put it into words, but perhaps it is better that we should consult together. The boy is changed—sometimes there is a look upon his face which I can't bear to see—a worried, miserable, *shamed* look, as if there were something he was trying to hide! He keeps asking for money, too, and at last I summoned

up courage and refused to give any more. I thought he would have been angry, but he only stared at me fixedly, and said, 'You'd better, Philippa! You will be sorry if you refuse!' Perhaps it was cowardly of me, but I was frightened and gave him what he asked, but I spoke very plainly to him, all the same. I said, 'Remember, Barney, that every unnecessary shilling you spend means extra anxiety and worry to me, and extra self-denial to the girls. We expect you to help, not to hinder. If you really love us you cannot have the heart to be extravagant just now.' He looked miserable, but he did not offer to return the money. I have given him no more since then, but he must get it *somewhere*, for he spends far more than Steve. He had half-a-dozen new ties in his drawer, and is always going to the theatre, and buying little things for his room. I don't like to speak to Steve, for the truth is he doesn't understand Barney, and does more harm than good by his interference, but, Hope, you and I must work together! We must save our boy before it is too late. We must not allow him to get into bad ways!"

"Poor Barney!" sighed Hope, sadly. "It must be a hard life for him down in that dreary office. We have wondered that he stuck to his work so well. We won't scold him, Phil. Boys won't stand being scolded by their sisters. We will just make home as bright as we can, and make a point of consulting him, and asking his help so that he may feel like a man, poor darling! a man who has women depending on him, and must keep straight for their sake! We'll appeal to the best in him, by showing our trust!"

Philippa looked at her with shining eyes.

"Oh, Hope, and you wanted to leave us! Bless you, dear, you *are* a help! I was feeling so cross and bitter, inclined to snap off the poor boy's head, though my heart was breaking for him all the time, but yours is the right way! You are right, and I am wrong. We will begin to-night, and see what we can do!"

When Barney returned from town an hour or two later, Hope, looking at him with opened eyes, felt a pang of remorse for the selfishness which had blinded her to the change in the boy's face. The once smooth forehead showed a faint network of lines, his glance had lost its candour, his radiant self-confidence was replaced by nervous uncertainty. He sat down quietly, casting a quick, almost furtive glance at Philippa's face, but when she smiled gaily in response, when she pressed dainties upon him, and called him "old boy" in her old loving tones, his relief and pleasure found vent in one of his old bursts of merriment. He laughed and sang, danced up and down the room, and chattered incessantly, and as if he had never known a care in his life.

"I had a rowing from old Waxworks to-day. I expect I shall get sacked soon." he announced, complacently. "The head of our department is such a muff. He can't see a joke, and spends half his time telling tales of me to the Boss. Now, Waxworks, with all his faults, has quite a decent sense of humour. I tried him pretty high one day, and he really behaved uncommonly well. I was at the telephone when he came out of his private room, and said: 'Oh, Charrington, just telephone home for me, that I am bringing two of the Directors to dinner to-night.' I said, 'Yes, sir!' and rang up at once. Of course, I expected him to go back to his room, so after I had given the message, 'Two directors coming to dinner to-night,' I dropped the tube and added a little warning on my own behalf for the benefit of the clerks—'*Don't—have—hash!*' They were all so jolly sober about it that I looked round to see what was up, and there was every man Jack of them scribbling for his life, while old Waxworks stood at his door looking on. I tell you, I felt pretty sick, but he just glared at me for a moment, and then went into his room and shut the door. My private opinion is that he wanted to laugh. One of the fellows told me that he quite snubbed Young—that's our Head—when he complained of my vaulting over the desks—waved his hand, and said, with his grandest roll, 'Your managah has been young himself!' I expect Young had it in for me worse than ever after that, and to-day he had his chance. He was out of the room, and it was beastly dull, so I proposed getting up a statue gallery, and posed the fellows standing up on their stools. We had the Three Graces, with their arms entwined, and their legs sticking up in the air. Ulysses meeting what's-her-name, Penelope, wasn't it? and hugging her round the waist, and all sorts of heathen Johnnies wrestling and fighting. Then the other fellows got scared and went back to their desks, and I was doing 'Ajax defying the lightning,' in fine style, when Young came sneaking in, and found me at it. He told the Boss, and the Boss sent for me, and jawed for a quarter of an hour. 'Willing to make excuses for youthful spirits, but must enforce discipline. Repeated complaints. Friend of your uncle. Very sorry. Give you another chance.' You know the kind of thing."

"Bar—ney!" cried the four sisters in chorus. But Barney only laughed and shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the odds? I'm sick of the whole show, anyway. If he thinks I am going to spend my life making out policies, he is jolly well mistaken. It's bad enough as it is. I should go cracked if I couldn't have a little fun!"

The lines came back to his forehead as he spoke, and Philippa regarded him in pained self-reproach. This bright, adventurous spirit was never intended by nature to be chained to an office desk. No wonder that he chafed at confinement, and occasionally broke the bounds. If circumstances would have allowed it, he would have made a resourceful middy, a soldier who would have done good work for his country; but circumstances had not allowed it, and here, once more, was the round peg in the square hole, here once more the inevitable failure and disappointment! Surely there is no greater wrong that can be done to a young man, no surer way of driving him into temptation, than to set him a life-long task which he despises and abhors! Philippa determined to consult the Hermit, who was by this time a regular Sunday night visitor at the flat, and whose understanding of the boy's nature made him a more valuable adviser than the staid elder brother. Perhaps Mr. Neil might be able to suggest a way out of the difficulty!

For the next few days Theo and Madge took their walks abroad together, and when at home remained shut up in the drawing-room together, whence came peals of mysterious laughter. Sheets of cardboard were smuggled to and fro, and finally taken out of the house and never brought back. In their place, however, appeared two bright half-sovereigns, displayed with huge pride on Madge's outstretched palm.

"First fruits!" she cried. "The foundations of a mighty fortune! I have set up in the advertising business, my dears, and am very well satisfied with my beginning. Oh, I am going to explain—just give me time and you shall hear all about it. You may remember, Phil, that you once advised me to try poster painting, and that I was mortally offended at the suggestion. I remembered it, though, and when Pepper advised me to go in for caricature, it seemed as if the two things might be worked together. I didn't know how to go to work, and was afraid it was no use trying anything big as a start, so I have been parading unfashionable thoroughfares this last week, looking out for shops which advertise their wares in the window, studying the said wares, and composing something really striking and original to attract the passers-by. There was one pastrycook's where they had a printed card in the window which pleased me very much—"Mutton Pies—As good as Mother makes 'em!" The inventor of that advertisement would, I was sure, be able to appreciate my efforts, so I drew a dinner-table, with a fat, motherly old dear cutting up pies at one end, while the different crowned heads of Europe sat round the table, elbowing each other for the first chance! You should have seen the delight of the proprietor when I exhibited it. He called his wife, and she came out of the little parlour, and shrieked with laughter. They wanted to know what I charged for it, and I said boldly, 'Ten shillings, and in a couple of years it will be ten pounds! I am just starting in this business, so I am charging a nominal price.' They whispered together, and asked couldn't I make it seven-and-six; but I was firm, and they were glad enough to secure it at the price. That was number one! Number two was a failure, though I thought the sketch was the best of all. The man was hard up, I think, and couldn't afford the money. The third was a sweet shop, for which I illustrated a

"BARNEY STARED AT PHILIPPA FIXEDLY. 'YOU'D BETTER, PHILIPPA! YOU WILL BE SORRY IF YOU REFUSE.'"—*(p. 882)*.

rhyme of Theo's, with figures of the 'Shock-Headed Peter' type. There was a nice old body in charge, who was not by any means an easy prey. She did not believe that the picture would bring her any fresh custom, but I persuaded her to try it for a couple of days, and saw it safely pasted on the window before we left. When we went back she confessed that there had been crowds of children about the window when the schools came out, and 'supposed she had better keep it now.' That's the second half-sovereign, and you needn't look nervous, Phil, for I assure you I never met with greater politeness—the assistants in the fashionable entertainment bureaus might learn a lesson from my Mutton Pie gentleman. Besides, it has shown me that I *can* do it, and I'll be more ambitious next time. I'll show you the sketch that the tobacconist refused, to give you an idea of the style of thing."

She ran into her bedroom, and brought back a narrow sheet of paper, on which was depicted a race-course, dotted over with the strangest, most comical of figures. The head-pieces of old Toby pipes peered forth from the necks of rotund tobacco-jars, and were crowned with cocked hats, as represented by well-filled pouches. Short-stemmed pipes did service for arms, long-stemmed pipes for the wide-spread legs, and it was really astonishing how life-like and animated the figures appeared! With one exception, however, the combatants were in a very sad case, tumbling, fainting, falling to the ground, standing still with bowl-like hands pressed to their hearts, while the winner pressed nearer and nearer to the goal, and on that winner's corpulent figure was inscribed the eloquent and touching legend—"Banks' tobacco leads the way!" "The name, of course, can be altered to suit the exigencies of the situation!" said Madge, drily, and at that Barney burst into a roar of delighted laughter.

"Good old Madge! Well done, you! That's a rattling good picture, and you will sell it yet. I tell you what—there's a little shop that I patronise sometimes on my way home, where I really think you might take it! They sell newspapers and tobacco, and so-called stationery, and the man is an enterprising sort of fellow, who would take up a new idea. I'll write down the address, so far as I know it, and you might call in some day!"

"Good old Barney! Good for you!" replied Madge in return. It was a simple enough suggestion, frankly made, and as frankly accepted—neither brother nor sister suspected to what weighty consequences it was to give rise.

CHAPTER XX.

OVER a week elapsed before Madge was able to carry out Barney's suggestion, and offer the race-course advertisement to the tobacconist who had been mentioned as a likely purchaser. As a preliminary measure she thought it wise to prospect the shop itself to see if it boasted any speciality which could be introduced into the sketch, and also to study the neighbourhood in search of further customers. When the first sketch had been touched up, and two more executed, she sallied forth to try her fate once more. She was less fortunate this time than on her first expedition, inasmuch as she met with two decided refusals. The tobacconist came last on the list, and Madge's thin face shone with the light of battle as she stepped across his threshold, for hers was one of the fortunate natures which holds the more firmly to its purpose, when face to face with difficulty. To return home without one single sheaf to flourish was not to be thought of for a moment; by cajolery, tact, or insistence, this last chance must be turned into a success, and a bright half-sovereign transferred from the till to her purse.

It was already late in the afternoon, the gas was lit, and the master of the shop was sitting behind his counter reading an evening newspaper. He looked up in astonishment as Madge entered, for his *clientèle* was almost exclusively masculine, and there was something about this quiet black-robed girl which made him rise hastily and put on his best manners, as he enquired with what he could have the pleasure of serving her. She was a lady certainly,—not a pretty lady, yet there was something very taking about the way in which she smiled, and said frankly—

"Well, do you know, I want *you* to be my customer! I have heard that you are enterprising, and fond of taking up new ideas, and I have drawn a picture advertisement which I thought you might like to buy to paste in your window!"

The man looked dubious, and disappointed. "I hardly think—" he began uncertainly, but Madge was already unrolling her paper, and what living tobacconist could have withstood the picture that was then revealed! This one, at least, was profoundly impressed, but when the money question was approached, he showed a shocking ignorance of the value of artistic efforts. "If you 'ad said 'arf-a-crown, now!" he said sadly, and then Madge thought it was time to cease cajolery, and show a firm hand. She spoke to him seriously on the subject of an artist's education,—its duration, its cost, its difficulties; she hinted at a reputation which

would be seriously injured by the receipt of silver coins, and gave him to understand that the day was near at hand when the sketch might be resold at a fabulous profit. The bargaining was continued for a considerable time, but Madge was sharp enough to see where she could afford to be firm, and would not concede a point.

In the end the tobacconist sighed and succumbed, but not without making a stipulation on his own side. There were one or two trifling additions which he wished made to the advertisement, and these Madge offered to do then and there if he could accommodate her with a table. There was no room in the tiny shop, but he looked towards the half-open door which led into the room behind, and whistled a summons, in response to which a thin, sad-faced woman made her appearance.

"Mother, will you give this young lady a seat in the parlour? She's got a drawing here that you will like to see, and there are one or two little things she is going to put in to make it better still!"

"Come in, Miss!" said the woman curiously, and Hope walked into a little oven of a room, which was, however, clean and tidy, and not without a certain homely charm. The pictures on the walls were almost without exception prints of racing horses, and while the tobacconist's wife chuckled over her sketch, Hope studied these prints with interest, and could not resist remarking on their number.

"You must be very fond of horses!"

"My husband is." The woman spoke shortly, and in a tone which made Madge regret her thoughtlessness. The thin face grew lined and troubled, her voice sank to a whisper, "I hate 'em!" she whispered, "I hate the sight of 'em. They have been the ruin of us. We used to be in quite a big way . . . . we've come down and down . . . . I don't know what will happen next!"

Madge murmured sympathetically and bent her head over her work. All unwillingly she had touched upon the family skeleton, and it was difficult to know how to offer consolation when the offender himself was within hearing distance. She worked steadily at her sketch, while the woman sat down to her sewing, and for several moments the silence was unbroken; then came the tinkle of the little bell and two customers entered the shop. Madge heard a request for tobacco, and a sporting paper, but she was in the middle of some fine printing, and did not lift her head from her sheet. The proprietor was evidently weighing out the tobacco while his customers studied the paper. Suddenly one of them spoke in a reproachful voice: "You were wrong about Friday's race, Mr. Edwards! 'Brownie' was not in it! You have not been fortunate in your tips lately!"

"Jolly bad tips," cried another voice, at the sound of which Madge's pencil slipped from her hand, and rolled across the table. She bent forward to rescue it, casting at the same time a lightning glance through the half-opened door. The two customers were still standing before the counter, the younger of the two speaking in hot, excited tones—"I wish I had never taken your advice! It's been a bad business for me. I've lost five pounds this last fortnight. . . ."

"I wish *I* had got off with five pounds, sir!" sighed the tobacconist, and his wife echoed the sigh with hopeless resignation. Then the bell jingled once more, the customers left the shop, and five minutes later Madge pushed back her chair and prepared to follow their example.

"Bless me, Miss, you *are* white!" cried the woman, anxiously, "Have you turned faint? Sit down, my dear, and I'll make you a cup of tea!"

"Thank you, you are very kind, but I shall be all right when I get into the air. The room—the room is rather warm!" Madge gave a flickering smile, pulled herself together, and went through the concluding interview with the shopman with creditable composure; but once outside in the street, once lost in the deadliest of all solitudes—a London crowd—her agitation could no longer be restrained.

Oh, Barney! Beloved Benjamin of the family—radiant, clear-eyed child; honest, fearless boy—have you come to this? Betting, Barney! Losing five pounds in a fortnight, throwing it away with both hands, while at home Philippa sat sewing—sewing from morning to night, mending, turning, contriving, to save a penny—while Steve became old before his time, and Hope grew pale and thin with anxiety! A rush of colour flooded Madge's cheeks, and the indignant blood tingled in her veins. Then came a sudden terrifying thought before which she paled again. *Where had Barney got this money?* It was impossible that he could have saved it out of his pittance of a salary; the home exchequer could not furnish it, then how had he come by it? Madge walked along the busy streets, pondering on this question, and on another equally important—her own course of action! If she could save her sisters from this painful discovery, if she could bring Barney to a sense of his wrong-doing, and then pay off his debts by her own work, Madge felt that she would not have lived in vain. It did not matter how hard she had to work—she would sit up half the night gladly, gladly; and her experience had been

so encouraging as to justify her in more ambitious flights. She would set to work at once on a design for a nursery frieze which had been in contemplation for some time past, she would offer it to a West End firm, and boldly ask a good price. If only Barney would be frank, and confess the whole truth! She reviewed his conduct for the last few weeks, and realised that with the exception of one outburst of spirits, the boy had been pre-occupied, silent, inclined to be irritable. She studied his face throughout the evening which followed, and was startled at what it told, even as Hope had been before her.

It was not until the house was quiet, and Barney had retired to his room, that Madge found her opportunity. Then she knocked softly at the door, was told to come in, and entered to find Barney hastily covering up a bundle of papers. The action, the glimpse at the papers which showed them so surely to be tradesmen's bills, fired Madge with fresh indignation. She looked fixedly at the boy, and he returned her gaze with surprised inquiry.

"Well! What do you want?"

"I want a little conversation with you apart from the rest. . . . I was in that tobacconist's shop this afternoon when you came in, Barney—that is to say, I was in the room behind the shop—putting a few last touches to my sketch!"

"Well!"

"The door was open, and I heard what you said!"

Barney sat down on a chair, stretched out his legs, stuck his hands in his pockets, and looked at her with an air of insolent calm. The worried, downcast air which he had worn on her entrance, disappeared as by magic; his face was hard, stubborn and defiant.

"Well—and what if you did?"

"What if I did? You can ask me that, when by your own confession you are betting and gambling, and leading a double life! When you are throwing away money which is needed for daily bread."

"I never threw away any of your money, did I? You mind your own business, Madge, and leave me to mind mine!"

"It is my business to look after you, and keep you out of mischief! Barney, where did you get that five pounds? It is bad enough that you should have lost it, but did you get it honestly in the first place?"

"You'd better be careful what you say! You are not talking to a thief, remember!"

"How am I to know that," cried Maggie wildly. "If a man begins to bet, one can never tell to what he may sink next! And how could a boy like you have such a sum to spare? Where did you get it, Barney? Wherever you got it, it must be paid back at once!"

There was no reply. Barney folded his arms, and set his lips in sullen determination; the question was repeated and ignored once more, the full tide of the girl's indignation could no longer be restrained.

"Coward! Despicable . . . . to see your sisters slaving for a pittance, and to be content to be a shame and a burden! If you cannot work, at least you might try to be a man, and not a disgrace to our name. . . . ."

Bitter words,—bitter words! what need to repeat them! The girl had worked herself into a frenzy of anger, and hardly realised what she was saying, and the boy sat by and listened,—the boy of seventeen, who all his life had been the spoiled darling of the household. Ten minutes before, the stress of accumulated troubles was upon him, and he had been wrestling with an agony of repentance. A kiss from Philippa, a soft word from Hope would have brought the boy to his knees in a flood of penitent tears, but the lash of Madge's words hardened his heart within him. He made no attempt to stop the torrent of reproach, but when at last she came to a pause, he rose slowly, and standing at his full height looked down upon her.

"If you have quite finished, will you leave my room?" He pointed to the door as he spoke, and there was a look on his face which Madge had never seen before. Barney, the boy, was dead, Barney, the man, confronted her with haggard face, and spoke in a tone of authority which she dared not disobey. She turned towards the door murmuring disjointed words of warning.

"If you will not tell . . . . Philippa! She will have to know."

"There is no necessity to disturb Philippa to-night. In the morning, no doubt, she will hear that,—and other things!"

There was an ominous sound in those last three words which chilled Madge with a sense of trouble to come, but the door was closed against her even as they were spoken, and she crept back to bed shivering and dismayed. Perhaps if she had been gentler—more conciliating—if she had fought with the weapons of love, instead of anger, she would not have been so signally defeated. Like many another quick-tempered sister, Madge's anger ended in self-reproach, and when too late, she would have given the world to withdraw her bitter, pitiless words!

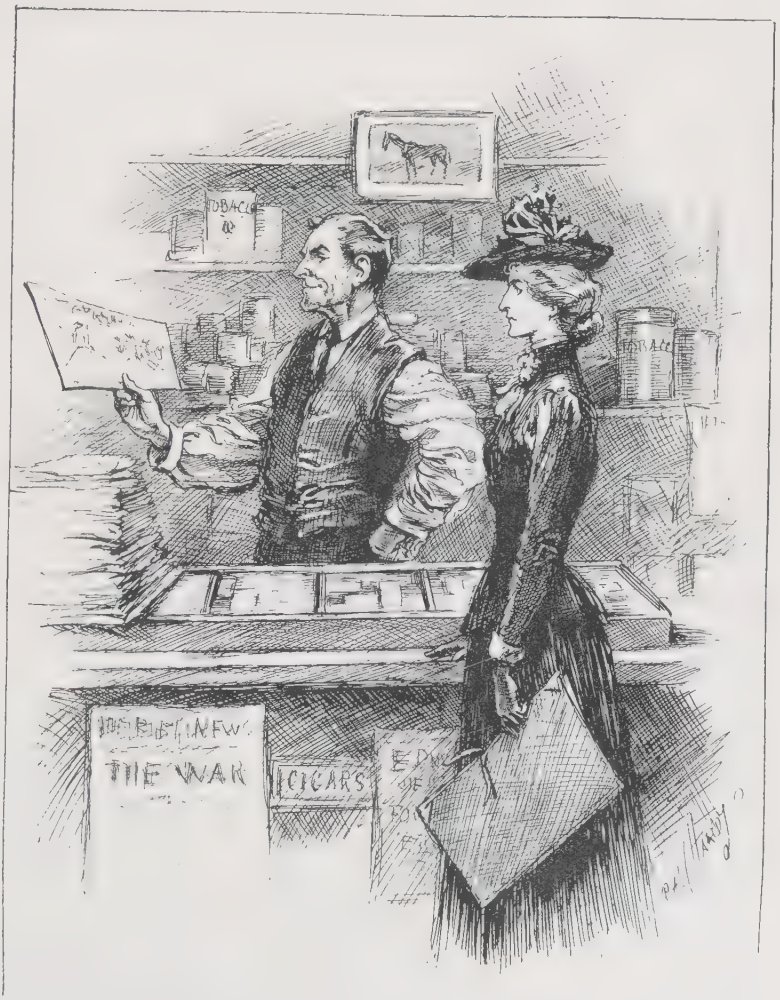
CHAPTER XXI.

THE next morning when the four sisters were seated at breakfast, Steve entered and stationed himself before the fire to read a long business-looking letter. His exclamations of dismay as he read roused the girls' attention. Steve did not reply to their eager questioning; with set face he handed them the letter, and one by one they read the unwelcome intelligence, and swelled the chorus of sighs. Barney was dismissed from his situation! The manager wrote a courteous, explanatory letter to the effect that an inexcusable escapade—the last of a long series—made it necessary for the lad's connection with the office to cease. He regretted this conclusion, not only from the fact that his old friend, Mr. Loftus, would have cause for disappointment, but also, he might add, for the sake of the boy himself, who had many good points, could work well when he had the will, and was a general favourite among his companions. If he might be pardoned for making the suggestion, an office desk was hardly the right position for a youth of so much spirit. Given more congenial work, he would no doubt do better. It was a kindly letter, and one which made its import as palatable as possible. Philippa sighed, and said: "Just what I have been thinking! It was too hard on the boy to expect him to settle to that humdrum life. Perhaps this is the best thing that could have happened."

But Steve was not disposed to take such a lenient view of the matter.

"If Barney had told us honestly that he could not stand it, we would have done our best to find another opening. But to be dismissed like this—to be turned away at an hour's notice—it is disgraceful! Uncle Loftus will have every right to be angry. 'An inexcusable escapade!' What can that refer to, I wonder!"

Theo covered her lips with her hands, for even at that moment she could not restrain a smile at the recollection. "I think I know! Barney told me the night before last. One of the clerks bought an alarum and left it on his desk while he went out to lunch. He had previously announced that he was going to meet his *fiancée* in town, have dinner, and take her to a concert afterwards. Barney got hold of the alarum and set it for nine o'clock. He knew the poor creatures would be sitting in cheap seats, and that there would be no cloak room for their things. The man would put the clock in his hat under the seat, and at the appointed time, Cr-r-r-r-r, off it would go! He



"'IF YOU 'AD SAID 'ARF-A-CROWN NOW,' SAID THE TOBACCONIST, SADLY."—(*p.* 884.)

would not be able to stop it. I asked Barney last night what had happened, but he would not tell me much. I suppose he was in low spirits about his dismissal. The alarum had gone off in the midst of a classical concerto, and the people around had been so cross! The clerk had to rush out with it as fast as he could go. He was very angry, and went straight to the manager to complain!"

"Oh! Oh! how naughty!" cried Philippa. Hope was laughing softly to herself, but Phil looked at Steve's stern face and dared not show any amusement. "Where *is* Barney?" she asked. "Perhaps he does not like to come in until we have read our letters. Call him, Theo dear, will you? His breakfast will be cold."

Theo stepped across the narrow passage and tapped at the door of Barney's room, waited a moment, opened it gently; then came running back, all scared and breathless.

"He is not there! The bed has not been slept in. Oh, Phil, what does it mean?"

But she knew what it meant; they all knew. There was no need for explanation. Together they crushed into the little room, and looked around with haggard eyes. Theo had a dreary sense of having been through it all before, and indeed it was an old, old story, even to the torn-up papers on the hearth, and the letter of farewell on the dressing-table. It was addressed to Philippa, and she read it aloud, with short, gasping breaths.

"I have lost my situation, and have got into debt, and lost money betting on races, and the best thing I can do is to take myself off and not trouble you any longer . . . . I can't stay here to be a shame and a burden."—Oh, Barney!—"If you and Steve will pay off my bills, you can look upon the money as my share in what was left. I will never trouble you for any more." Here came a great dash as if the writer had intended to end the letter there, but at the bottom of the sheet were a few words scribbled in uncertain letters.—"Good-bye, Phil! I'll try to keep straight for your sake!"

Philippa looked up; agony was written on her face, but her first words were of thanksgiving. "Thank God! He is alive and well—he will do himself no harm! My poor boy . . . . we must find him, and bring him home again!"

"Betting!" echoed Steve. "Debts! I can't understand it. We kept him supplied with pocket-money—he had a comfortable home—what more did he want? I don't wonder he was ashamed to face us, but it is a cowardly thing to run away from the consequences of his wrong-doing and bring fresh anxiety upon us. I wouldn't have believed it of Barney."

"It is my fault! Blame me—I drove him to it!" said Madge, desperately. Her sisters stared at her in amazement, while she told the history of the last afternoon and evening, omitting nothing, extenuating nothing, repeating her bitter words with unflinching honesty. Only her face betrayed the inward agony of remorse, but that was eloquent enough, and when she had finished, not one of her hearers had the heart to utter a reproach. Philippa looked appealingly at Steve, as if asking what could be done next, but for once the set face refused her comfort in her need. Stephen could be trusted to do what was right, but his search would lack the inspiration which would come from a thorough understanding of the boy's character. "And I'm only a woman, I haven't the knowledge that a man would have!" sighed poor Phil to herself; then she stretched out her hands and cried, sharply, "I want the Hermit! Barney liked him so much. They used to talk together; he will know what was in the boy's mind, and be able to help us."

"I'll bring him up," said Steve, and turned straightway to the door. He, too, was eager for a man's advice, a calm, masculine judgment to temper the discussion with these distracted girls. Relief was apparent in his manner when he followed the Hermit into the dining-room five minutes later, and summoned his sisters to meet him.

"Barney has gone!" said Philippa, simply, as she put her hand into the one outstretched to meet it. Then she met the grave tenderness of the gaze that was turned upon her, and, for the first time, she broke down, and sobbed out the wild appeal. "Oh, find him for me! Find him for me! He has run away, and it is all my fault. I brought him to this terrible city and shut him up in an office all day long, and Barney is such a restless creature—he can't endure confinement. If he got into trouble here, when we were all near him, what will become of him now when he is alone? Oh, find him for me! Bring him back . . . ."

"I will, Miss Philippa, if it is humanly possible to do so," replied the Hermit, gravely. And then Madge's story was retold, and the question raised again as to how Barney had come into possession of so much money.

"I can account for some of it at least," Mr. Neil said. "I saw that the boy was troubled, and I found out that he was in need of money. Eventually he asked me for the loan of five pounds. I said, 'My boy, you must not begin borrowing at

your age. It is a bad habit, and I won't encourage you in it; but I had made up my mind to give you a cheque for a Christmas present—you shall have it in advance, if that would be a help to you.' He said it would, and I gave him the five pounds for which he had asked."

"It was not right of you,—No! You should not have done it. It was leading the boy into temptation." Philippa spoke in tones of strong reproach, but though Mr. Neil's face was troubled, it was in nowise repentant.

"I have been a boy in an office myself, Miss Philippa," he said gently, "for two years—two long, miserable years; and I know—forgive me for saying so!—that there is an even greater temptation in being too short of money. When a lad gets his first taste of independence it goes hard with him if he cannot indulge in the little luxuries which his companions enjoy, and the shops seem irresistible. I hoped that by means of my gift Barney might be able to pay off his debts and start afresh!"

"You have been very generous—and very forgiving, Mr. Neil!" said Steve, "we are much indebted to you. But what can we do this morning? I must get to the office as soon as I can, for there are already two men away. It won't do for me to lose my berth into the bargain!"

Steve spoke with a tinge of bitterness, for in truth he found himself in a painful position, the position of the elder brother in the parable! He had never got into debt, nor betted, nor failed in a single instance in his duty to his sisters, and it was a little hard to realise as he did this morning that to each one of the four—Phil included—the curly-headed prodigal was dearer than himself! He looked at the Hermit, and asked anxiously: "Can you come with me?"

"It is what I was about to propose. I am my own master, and can give all my time to the search. We had better go to the office first, and try to discover who was the companion of the tobacconist's shop: then if we get a clue, I will follow it up!"

"Right!" said Steve, and went into the little hall, to find Hope already brushing the coat which she had taken down from its peg. She helped him to put it on, turned down the collar at the back, and let her hand rest against his neck, as she murmured a few, low words.—"Dear old Steve! What should we do without you!" It was always Hope's way to divine a wound, and lay a healing hand upon it!

The two men went straight to the Insurance office, and interviewed the manager in his room. "Waxworks," as Barney had irreverently dubbed him, was unaffectedly grieved to hear of the boy's flight, and repentant of his own share in the catastrophe. "I liked the lad!" he said. "One could not help liking him. If I had consulted my own wishes only I should have lectured him well and let him stay on, but in a big place like this it is absolutely necessary to keep a firm hand. I had overlooked several breaches of discipline, and it could not go on. He must be found, of course, and then if you take my advice you will let him live an out-of-door life. Send him abroad! He is just the type that is wanted in the Colonies. Now I'll send for Young, and you can question him as you please!"

Mr. Young, however, had no light to throw upon the subject, neither had Barney's special companions among the clerks, who were interviewed in their turn. The lad had left the office alone and unaccompanied, so that the identity of his companion still remained a mystery, which the tobacconist alone could solve. The two therefore made their way to the little shop. Madge's sketch was displayed in all its glory in the window, but neither brother nor friend had the heart to laugh at it to-day. The tinkling bell announced their entrance to the proprietor, and they lost no time in telling him the object of their visit. Two young gentlemen had been in the habit of visiting his shop, and asking his advice on racing matters; their last call happening the night before, somewhere about five o'clock. The younger of the two was tall, dark and handsome—for private reasons his friends were anxious to interview his companion. Who was he, and where employed?

Did the man know, or did he not? He professed utter ignorance, but there was a slyness on his face which did not escape the notice of his questioners. A number of gentlemen came to his shop . . . sometimes they did happen to talk of a race, if it was near at hand—but he never inquired a customer's name. Gentlemen wouldn't like it! Couldn't say for certain that he remembered the two just mentioned!

"The man lies! We will waste no more time on him," said the Hermit sternly as he turned away from the door. "Go back to your office, Charrington, and leave me to see the police and put an advertisement in the papers. That is all that we can do at the moment, though I shall not rest until I have tracked that unknown friend. He will probably be able to tell us more than any one else. I'll think out a plan of action for the next few days. This is my business as well as yours. The boy has been like a young brother to me this last year!"

Looking back on the days which followed

Barney's disappearance, the Charringtons were often puzzled to understand how they endured the strain and suspense, and marvelled at their own composure. Day after day the Hermit continued his search, and came home weary and disappointed. Philippa listened to his report with a steady face, and abated not one of her usual efforts for the comfort of the household, while the three younger sisters set their teeth and went on doggedly with their work.

"If we were actresses or public singers, we should have to keep our appointments, and smile and be cheerful; if we were clerks or teachers we should have to turn out as usual, and be patient and forbearing; if we were shop assistants we should have to stand on our feet all day long, and be polite, however much we were aggravated. We are poor things if we call ourselves working women, and then indulge our feelings like any fine lady!" Theo had said, sternly, to two drooping figures who sat by a fire, gazing at idle fingers. She had no need to speak a second time. In the temporary eclipse of Madge's bright spirits, Theo had taken upon herself to be the cheery, inspiring member of the family; which *rôle* shook her out of the old self-engrossed groove, and suited her well. Now, as she went into her room and sat down at her desk, her heart swelled with a sense of joy and gratitude for the talent which had been entrusted to her care. She took up her manuscript and set to work with none of the difficulty and hesitation which often hampered her progress; the thoughts crowded into her brain, the right word came of itself and did not need to be sought. The difficult point was overcome, and she laughed with delight at the wittiness of her own dialogue. Here, then, was a discovery, that even sorrow had its compensation, since it brought with it fresh understanding, earnestness, and delicacy of touch! When the artist went in to lunch, the light on her face made her sisters look and wonder. "No need to ask how you have fared to-day, Theo!" Hope said. "I don't know who your characters are at present, but they have been good children this morning!"

"Couldn't be better!" said the author brightly. "So charmingly alive, and saying such witty things. It is a curious delusion, but when I do my best work I always feel as if some one else suggested it, not I! I was sad enough in my own heart, but as I wrote a little sprite seemed to whisper in my ear. The good things *came!* I didn't make them. I suppose the world's great writers often feel like that. I am quite sure that when they read over their books they must be astounded at their own cleverness!"

"It must be a very—a very agreeable sensation. I have never been the least little bit surprised at mine! I tried to work, too, but I didn't get on well. You two girls make me ashamed of myself, but I think sometimes that I was never meant to be a public character!" sighed Hope, wrinkling her forehead in her pretty, wistful fashion. "I don't seem to have the faculty of earning money!"

"Because Nature intended some one else to make it for you, darling! You are one of the dear, frightened, humble little creatures who need a big man to look after them, and stand between them and the world. I do hope you will marry, Hope! Do, please, the first chance you get. You'd be ever so much happier, and it would be so nice for us. Marry a rich man, who lives in the country, and send us hampers every week!" cried unsuspecting Madge. It seemed natural enough to the others that Hope should blush at the suggestion; only Theo understood the meaning of that blush, and the train of thought which suggested the reply.

"I think I shall go to see Avice this afternoon. I promised Steve that I would call before the end of the week if we had no news. He doesn't want uncle to hear in town—he might be annoyed that we had not told him ourselves."

When Hope saw her aunt's face, however, she knew at a glance that she was too late with her news, and she sat meekly listening to the tirade which followed, thankful that she herself was the listener instead of Philippa. Her gentleness was her best weapon, however, for having said her say, Mrs. Loftus began to soften, and to regret having spoken so strongly. Argument or contradiction would have incensed her still further; but how could one go on scolding a pretty, timid creature, who merely sat still and looked miserable! She paused, frowned, and finally asked the amount of the debts which Barney had left behind. "Everything, I mean! The whole sum for which you are liable."

"I think, perhaps . . . I'm afraid nearly t-twenty pounds!"

The gasp with which Hope replied was for the magnitude of the sum mentioned; the echoing gasp from the other side of the fireplace was for an exactly opposite reason.

"Only twenty pounds!" cried Avice; "the price of a gown. . . . The poor boy ran away for that! Hope, dear, I will pay it myself, I will give it to you this afternoon before you go! You shan't be worried about it any more."

"It is paid already, dear. Steve saw to that at once. You are very kind, but Barney would

not like it, and we have a good deal of money still left. Philippa drew it out of the bank."

"You will be in the workhouse soon," Mrs. Loftus prophesied cheerfully. "I never heard anything more mad than to spend your capital as you are doing. Just think of the inroads you must have made into it this year!"

"I'd rather not, Aunt Loftus, if you don't mind! It is always the first step which costs, but we have made a start and hope to do wonders next year. At the worst I shall avoid the workhouse by throwing myself on Avice's mercy. You would have me down to the Lodge, wouldn't you, dear?"

The glance exchanged between the two cousins was full of confidence and affection, and Avice's voice had a new tone of animation as she replied:

"I should like to have you always! Oh, Hope, I *do* enjoy shopping now, and seeing the girls who were with us in summer. Mother is quite scandalised because we talk so much, but being with them does me more good than I can say. And the Conjurer's daughter is going to be married—to a Magic Lantern! I thought of having them down for their honeymoon."

"Avice is far more interested in that engagement than she is in Truda Bennett's, and she is to be one of Truda's bridesmaids, too!" said Mrs. Loftus in a puzzled tone as she pushed back her chair and rose from her place before the tea-table. Hope rose too with an impulse of escape, and bent down to pick up muff and gloves. Her heart had given a great leap of fear, and was beating in heavy throbs, but she said savagely to herself, "You *shan't* blush! You shan't look startled!" and turned an unmoved face to her aunt.

"Miss Bennett engaged! I didn't know!"

"You can't have used your eyes, then, when you were with us last year. They flirted shockingly!—It ought to have been announced long ago. By the way, Hope, we go down to the Shanty next week. You had better come with us for a little visit. I meant to write and ask you, and you look pale—as if you needed a change. We shall be almost the same party as before."

"Dear Auntie, I can't! It is good of you to think of it, but I couldn't leave home just now. I should be so anxious and troubled that I should be of no use to you."

"You must come later, then. It will be all the same to us, but the others will be disappointed. Truda asks after you continually, and Ralph Merrilies said he looked forward to some more delightful music. I wish you could have come, Hope!"

"He wanted to meet me, then," said Hope, drearily to herself, as she took her way home. "It's just as I always thought—he cared for me only as a friend, and was kind to me because I was poor and friendless. He must have grown fond of Truda after all! She is so bright and amusing.—I suppose she showed him tricks and made him laugh. He is so serious himself, he needs someone cheerful. I hope he will be very, very happy." Her eyes smarted suddenly, and a sob swelled in her throat.—"But, oh, I wish I had never met him—I wish I were not so wretched! Truda had so many other things, and I should have made him happy. It is hateful of me, but I believe I should make a nicer wife. . . . I should have been so good to him. Oh, Ralph! Ralph!"

Hope pulled down her thick veil, and cried quietly behind its shelter, as she wended her way home through the busy streets.

"HOPE LET HER HAND REST AGAINST HIS NECK. 'DEAR OLD STEVE! WHAT SHOULD WE DO WITHOUT YOU.'" —(*p.*889.)

CHAPTER XXII.

TEN days passed by and brought no news of Barney. Steve devoted every spare moment to the search, the Hermit was unremitting in his efforts, but with the best will in the world they proved but poor detectives. The tobacconist remained stubbornly uncommunicative, and as Madge would not have recognised Barney's companion if she had seen him, it was little use watching the shop. The Insurance clerks were interviewed again and again, but Barney had been prudent in one respect at least: he had not breathed a word of his betting transactions in the office. He had vaguely mentioned "A friend of mine"—"A fellow I know," but had given no names, and the consensus of opinion was that he must have picked up acquaintances in the luncheon hour, when, boy-like, he was fond of wandering about from place to place. The Hermit lunched diligently in all the principal restaurants in the neighbourhood of the office, and made a point of entering into conversation with his companions, but he failed to meet any one who remembered Barney.

"I am at a standstill. I don't know what to do next. I am afraid there is very little of the Sherlock Holmes about me, Miss Philippa," he said dejectedly, on the tenth afternoon, as he detailed the history of the day's search. It had become a custom for him to come upstairs to tell his story and to be refreshed with tea and scones, and the girls welcomed his advent as a break in the long anxious day. So far he had brought no good news, but while he was devoting so much time to their service, they felt bound to cheer him for his disappointments, and the effort was good for themselves also.

"Never mind, if you were Sherlock Holmes you wouldn't be yourself, and you are a much pleasanter neighbour as you are!" replied Philippa, as she lifted the little copper kettle from its stand, and poured the water into the teapot. She kept her face turned aside so that he might not see the disappointment written upon it, and reminded herself for the hundredth time that she could afford to be patient. Had not Barney promised to keep straight for her sake! Perhaps after all this separation from home might teach him its value, as no amount of petting and spoiling would have done, and on his return he would show a gentler, more disciplined spirit. Philippa would never allow herself to believe that this absence was more than temporary. She handed the plate of home-made scones to the Hermit, smiling the while with some of her old mischievous brightness.

"Hungry?"

"I had steak to-day. I find on the whole that steak suits me best," replied the Hermit, screwing up his eyes in judicial fashion. "It's so tough that it takes a long time to despatch. Then, again, it takes ten minutes to prepare. I calculate that I can while away a good half-hour on a plate of steak, to say nothing of after courses. In this way I get several changes of companions, and I manage to work round the conversation until I can bring in Barney's name, and inquire if they happen to have met him. I am getting quite skilled in the exigencies of small talk."

"Poor thing, and you hate it so! It is noble of you to persevere as you do, for I am sure there is nothing you dislike more."

"No, no, don't say that! It is good for me. I have studied books too much, and men too little, in my life—to my own great loss. Before you took me in hand a year ago, I was a veritable hermit, and the old habits cling about me still. I feel terribly rusty among all those bright, alert young fellows, and they treat me as if I belonged to a different species. Do you—do you notice anything pedantic in my manner?"

All four girls were in the room, but it was to Philippa that he addressed the question; he had a way of looking at her when he spoke, and the girl was gratefully conscious of the fact. Theo and Madge, even Hope herself, had a way of treating her with affectionate patronage, as a dear, kind, pre-occupied Martha who could not be expected to understand their higher flights. She had suffered beneath this treatment, and was delighted that these fledgelings should now see in what estimation she was held by a scholar of repute.

"You are the *kindest* man I ever met! There is no one else among our friends who would jeopardise his digestion by eating tough steak day after day in the hope of doing us a service!" she cried, deftly evading a direct answer which, if honest, must needs have been in the affirmative. Theo's hand advanced cautiously, and gave a meaning pressure to Madge's elbow; Madge stared into space, with wooden stolidity of feature. Hope looked wistfully from Philippa to the Hermit, from the Hermit back to Philippa once more.

Then suddenly the sound of the electric bell, followed by a silence of expectation. It might portend a letter, a telegram, it might be even Barney himself!

(*To be concluded.*)

The Ambassadors.

Written and Illustrated by MAURICE CLIFFORD.

"Whither away, oh gnomes? whither away?
The Summer day is drawing to a close,
While through the grasses dead,
You march with stately tread,
The bats flit overhead.
Whither away?"

"To Tara's Lake, dear child, to Tara's Lake,
Our way we take to pray the Elfin Queen
Some gossamer to lend,
Our good King's hose to mend,
For this our way we wend
To Tara's Lake."

"Give you 'Good Night!' dear gnomes: give you 'Good Night!'
Fast fades the light. Your feet with dew are wet.
I'd mend those hose, you see,
But that your darns must be
Far, far too fine for me,
Give you 'Good Night!'"

Curious Errors of the Eye.

FIG. 1.—THE GIRL IN THE FOREGROUND SEEMS TO BE MUCH SMALLER THAN THE WOMAN, YET THEY ARE OF THE SAME PROPORTIONS.

By T. GIFFORD.

I WELL remember the first time I was taken out fish spearing. It was on a hot and still night of summer. The flaring pine torch in the bow of the boat cast a ruddy glow on the unrippled surface of the water, and gleamed on the vast grey cypress trunks which bordered the deep river.

"Strike quick when you see a fish," was the advice of the man who wielded the paddle in the stern. A moment later a long dark shadow showed up, poised just below the surface. A thrill of excitement shook me as I brought the three-pronged weapon down with all my force —and followed it headlong into the water."

It is an old joke this, and one which is played upon every greenhorn who visits the country. A man may have the best eyesight in the world, but it is certain that he will not be able to estimate accurately the position of a fish even a foot beneath the surface of the water. The fish appears twice its real size and refraction shows it in a different place from that which it really occupies.

"Seeing is believing" is a proverb which, like many other old saws, cannot be depended on. The sight is as, or even more, easily tricked than any other of the senses—how easily a few simple experiments will prove. Take, for instance, a rough sketch of any piece of scenery which shows the sky, and ask a friend to insert the moon. It is perfectly certain that, even if the person be an artist, the moon he or she makes, will be from five to twenty times too large. A photograph will prove the error. The moon is in reality so small an object that its correct size in a picture eight feet long would be only one third of an inch! There are two reasons for visual error in this respect. In the first place, the moon is a very bright object against a dark sky. This causes the eye to over-estimate its size. The error is due to the phenomenon known as "irradiation." Secondly, the moon, when it rises, is

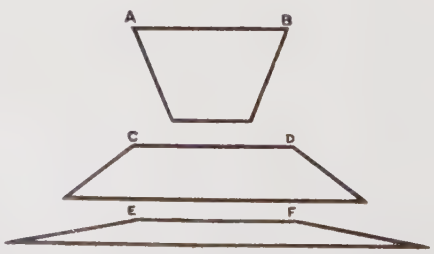


FIG. 2.—THE SIGHT MAY BE EASILY DECEIVED AS TO THE LENGTH OF LINES.

Few will believe that A B, C D, and E F, are of the same length.

seen through so great a thickness of atmosphere that it is actually magnified to a very considerable extent.

The familiar experiment with a top-hat offers another proof of the ease wherewith the eye is deceived. There are very few people who, if asked to mark upon a wall the height from the floor of an ordinary silk hat, will get within four inches of it. Many indeed will put its measurement at from fifteen to eighteen inches, instead of eight, which is the real figure.

Stars always appear to the naked eye very much larger than they are in reality. On a clear night they appear to be actually circular in shape, and usually to have five to seven rays proceeding from them. In reality the enormous distance by which we are separated even from huge suns like Sirius prevents such stars being seen from this earth as more than dots of light. The telescope and camera prove this to be true. That they appear larger is explained partly by irradiation and partly by the fact that the front of the human eye is never a perfect sphere, but is more curved in one direction than in another. The rays seen are due to certain lines which traverse the human eye from centre to circumference.

Here is a simple illustration of a trick that one's eyesight plays one. Take a sheet of paper and cover up the lower half of one of these lines of type. You will find that you can read almost equally well and quickly without a sight of the lower half of the letters, although the lower halves are, as a matter of fact, somewhat the larger. Reverse the experiment, and reading will become a matter of considerable difficulty. Yet you have probably been accustomed to imagine that your eye grasped the whole of the type at once.

FIG. 5.—A GIRL, THE STRIPES OF WHOSE DRESS RUN PERPENDICULARLY, LOOKS TALLER THAN ONE WHOSE STRIPES RUN TRANSVERSELY.

FIG. 3.—THE SHAPE OF THE FRAME IN WHICH A FIGURE IS DRAWN HAS MUCH TO DO WITH ITS APPARENT SIZE.

The dimensions of the lads are exactly identical

FIG. 4.—WHITE MAKES THE INDIVIDUAL APPEAR STOUTER, WHILE BLACK REDUCES PROPORTIONS.

The two women shown here are of identical measurements.

These illusions appear much more striking at first sight. As the eye dwells upon them it learns by degrees that it is being tricked. The fact is, that the eye is merely a lens to receive impressions. These impressions must be differentiated by experience. We can only judge of the size of objects at a distance by experience. Perspective must be acquired by years of learning, and even then mistakes are easy. Look for instance at Fig. 1. The girl in the foreground seems to be much smaller than the woman further away, but is not so in point of fact. One knows, however, that a woman is bigger than a girl, and the brain not being warned by the eye jumps to the conclusion that the woman's figure in the picture is the larger of the two.

The sight may be equally easily deceived as to the length of lines. Few will believe that A B, C D, and E F at Fig. 2 are of the same length. The reader of this article will probably need a foot-rule to convince herself of the fact.

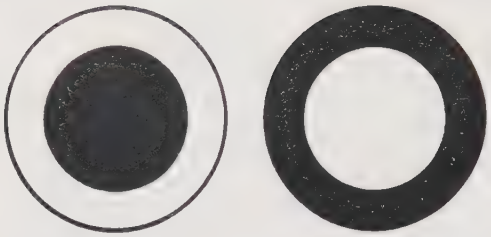


FIG. 6.—A BLACK CIRCLE ON WHITE APPEARS SMALLER THAN A WHITE ON BLACK.

And it is almost as hard to credit that G H and J K in Fig. 9 are of equal dimensions.

There are other illusions more difficult to understand. The shape of the frame in which a figure is drawn has, for instance, much to do with its apparent size. In Fig. 3 are shown two shepherds side by side, of which the left-hand boy certainly appears to be decidedly the smaller of the two. Here again the measuring tape or compass must be used to prove conclusively that the dimensions of both are identical.

A good dressmaker or tailor has, as a rule, a thorough knowledge of the commoner visual errors. A short and stout person, for instance, will never be advised to dress in white, for white makes such an individual appear stouter than ever, while black reduces their apparent proportions in a wonderful way. This is well illustrated by Fig. 4. A black circle on white appears smaller than a white one on black. (See Fig. 6.)

An equally fatal error is for the short person to wear any striped material in which the stripes run transversely. Perpendicular stripes will, on the other hand, add to their apparent height. Every one has noticed how popular those dark flannels with narrow white lines are with very short men, and how, on the other hand, they are shunned by gaunt six-footers. To prove this the girl in Fig. 5 dressed in perpendicular stripes looks taller than her companion, whose stripes run transversely, though, as a matter of fact, the two are of precisely the same height.

FIG. 8.—IT WOULD SEEM THAT NO TRAIN COULD TRAVEL ON THIS RAILWAY, YET THE TRACKS ARE ABSOLUTELY LEVEL.

Look at the squares illustrated at Fig. 7, and you will be startled to find that here your eye sees something which certainly does not exist. In the white spaces between the corners of the black squares, dark blotches are plainly perceptible. Yet you know as well as possible that the spaces are pure white paper. This is one of those illusions which prove the persistency of an image received by the eye. Those well-known advertisements in which you gaze for twenty seconds at a dot in the centre of a word, and then, looking up at the ceiling, see the same word appear in its complementary colours, depend upon the same principle.

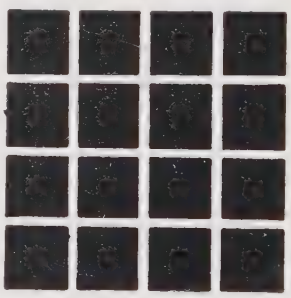


FIG. 7.—IN THE WHITE SPACES BETWEEN THE CORNERS OF THE BLACK SQUARES, DARK BLOTCHES ARE PLAINLY PERCEPTIBLE. YET IT IS A PURE ILLUSION OF THE EYE.

One of the most startling illusions to which the eye is subject was discovered a good many years ago by the German, Zollner. It is known as the misleading railway tracks, and is here illustrated by Fig. 8. On first glancing at it, it would seem that no train could travel on such a railway, yet the tracks are in reality absolutely parallel.

A further proof of the way in which perpendicular and horizontal lines perplex the eye is afforded by Fig. 10. At first sight any one would assert that E F was longer than G H. The two lines are, however, precisely similar in length. This you will see more easily by holding the page sideways.

There is a well-known optical illusion, discovered some years ago by Professor Silvanus Thompson, which is one of the most peculiar known, and the causes of which are too intricate

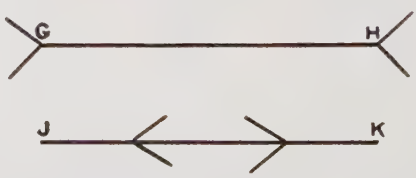


FIG. 9.—THE LINES G H AND J K IN THIS FIGURE ARE OF EXACTLY SIMILAR DIMENSIONS.

to be explained here. It is illustrated at Fig. 11. When the page is given a twirling motion, the cogwheel on the left apparently revolves slowly in one direction, while the wheel on the right turns rather more rapidly in the other.

The question of perspective is one which troubles other people besides artists. How often indeed it happens that when driving or walking on an open road, the opposite hill will appear almost perpendicular, and people or vehicles moving up it like flies crawling up a wall. One of the most striking illustrations of this that I personally have seen is the appearance of the road rising on the north side of Postbridge on Dartmoor; it appears at first sight to be absolutely perpendicular. Another similar illusion is also to be seen on another part of Dartmoor. Passing down the hill from Princetown towards the western Dart, the river, of which about a mile is visible along the valley beneath, has the appearance of running uphill instead of down. The phenomenon is known as foreshortening, that same foreshortening which sometimes causes such startling effects in the photographs taken by beginners.

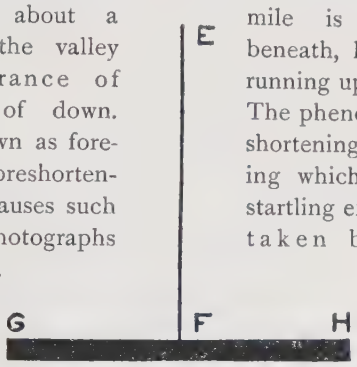


FIG. 10.—THE LINE E F SEEMS LONGER THAN G H, YET IN REALITY THEY ARE OF THE SAME LENGTH.

FIG. 11.—GIVE THE PAGE A TWIRLING MOTION, AND IT SEEMS THE COGWHEEL ON THE LEFT REVOLVES SLOWLY IN ONE DIRECTION WHILE THAT ON THE RIGHT TURNS RAPIDLY IN THE OTHER.

In representation of bas-relief work, too, it is sometimes extremely difficult to say whether the figures stand out of the wood or are cut into it.

Speaking of this kind of thing reminds one of that ever popular scientific toy, the stereoscope, which was first suggested to the world so long ago as 1838 by that wonderful observer, Sir Charles Wheatstone. In the stereoscope each picture is viewed by a separate lens whereby the mental image becomes as that of a solid possessing three dimensions. Yet it is a curious fact that even one eye may be tricked into seeing a picture as if it possessed solid dimensions. If you roll a piece of brown paper into a tube and shutting one eye look through this tube with the other a photograph will show up with almost stereoscopic distinctness.

These are but a few of the many illusions to which the human eye is subject, but they serve to illustrate the principal errors of sight. Many others will no doubt occur to GIRL'S REALM readers who spend a little thought upon the subject.

PILATUS.

THE morning breaks, and in the clear, still air,
The mountains rise in holy grandeur, calm
And tranquil lies the lake, a blessed psalm
Of peace pours thro' the land its music rare.
And in the mid-day sun the orchards fair,
Spread forth their glittering blossoms. Free from harm
The children in the sunshine play, and warm
Their lives, regardless yet of earthly care.
Pilatus, who canst kiss the rose-tipped cloud,
Or wrap yourself in mist alone, and proud,
Whence come your self-possession, peace of mind?
Ah, tell these struggling mortals where to find
The eternal rest which clothes your snow-capped peak,
Till on our solitude the dawn shall break.

R. L. MONKHOUSE.

RED FROCK.

By MARY E. MANN,

Author of "Out in Life's Rain," "Under the Syringas," "The Man at the Window," etc., etc.

Illustrated by PHIL. EBBUTT.

". . And Thou remembererest of what toys
We made our joys. . . "

"I AM bounded on the north," said Lady Mary to herself, "by the man in the pulpit. He is always looking to see if little girls fidget in their pews. On the south by all the long row of servants sitting behind me. On the east"—here she raised both hands an inch or two from her lap—"right hand east, left hand west," she whispered to refresh her memory, while Miss Hawksleigh patted the one little hand reprovingly and Lady Amblegate imprisoned the other softly in her own. "On the east by mother and father. On the west by Miss Hawksleigh, who shall *not* pat my hand. I am just like England," she concluded, "a little island bounded everywhere. It makes me feel very hot."

Beyond Lady Mary's western boundary was the side aisle where the Sunday school children sat. The little north door of the church stood open there, and if Lady Mary had sat lower in the nave she could have got a view through it of the churchyard and a buttercup meadow, and beyond these the Rectory garden; she might have caught a glimpse of bird and butterfly, and could have watched the passing of light breezes over the long grass and the gentle stir of the leaves; but having, by right of birth, inherited an undisputed title to the uppermost room at feasts, it came to pass that she found herself "bounded on the north" by the clergyman alone.

But although she missed the view from the open door that summer morning, the portion of the side aisle visible to her held an object on which her eyes were sure to alight with interest sooner or later. The pew on a level with the Court pew and the two pews behind it, were filled with the village school children. The overflow, in the shape of a little girl in a red frock, sat alone in the pew immediately in front of these.

She had sat there last Sunday also, and had often turned a quick head to look at the little great lady in the Court pew; then, meeting the gaze of the blue, watching eyes, had turned quickly away again. The hours of service had passed with unusual swiftness to Lady Mary on that morning, and she held herself for once admirably still, looking and looking at the little solitary girl. She herself was clothed in white from the crown of her soft hat to her shoes. Her face was as fair and almost as colourless as a lily, her straight fair hair, nearly colourless too, shone with a shimmering more of silver than of gold. The little girl who kicked her stout-shod heels contentedly across the way, was attired in a hot-looking dress of red woollen, and wore a sailor hat tilted rakishly over one ear.

Lady Mary admired the child's appearance immensely. In all her life she herself had never worn anything but white—warm woolly white and fur in the cold weather, and white, soft and fine as gossamer, in such summer months as this. She thought nothing prettier than that stiff red frock of the little village girl's could be, and she approved the way the black elfin locks, which only knew the comb about once a week, hung "anyhow" beneath the sailor hat.

Now and again the child would stop the swinging of her legs, and stealthily holding open the pocket of her dress would peep in it, would send her little red hand diving to its depths, would bring some object, unseen of Lady Mary, to the surface, would look at it furtively, drop it again to the bottom of the pocket, and flash a sly face round upon the child in the Court pew, always to find Lady Mary's eyes upon her.

Lady Mary had thought she would give a great deal to know what there was in that pocket.

However, by that Sunday morning, when, profiting by the lesson of the week, she demonstrated her likeness to England, the child in the red frock had slipped to the back of her mind and been almost forgotten. But having said she was bounded on the west by Miss Hawksleigh, she had looked beyond, and there was the solitary little girl with the crimson frock and the elf-locks again. Then the fidgetiness, which always attacked Lady Mary rather badly about that epoch in the service, left the child, and she became in her absorption still as any little sculptured daughter of an earl. Her wide, blue eyes never left the little figure in red, watching for the swift turn of the head, the quick glance slyly averted, and all that pantomime with the pocket.

Lady Mary would have given all the treasures in her nursery at home to know what was there. It was something, she felt assured, more dearly precious than anything which had come into her hands. Oh, if it only were the fashion to ask things of each other in church as it was to ask them of God, how prayerfully she would have piped forth—"Little girl, let me see what you have in your pocket!"

There was a general rustle of the congregation going upon its knees. Miss Hawksleigh gently lowered Lady Mary upon her crimson hassock. The lonely, red-frocked little girl in the north aisle wriggled down upon the boards. Arrived there, she sat back contentedly upon her heels, and at once began diving into the depths of the pocket again.

A happy thought came to the earl's daughter. For once she could make a prayer to God of her very own, one that she could understand as well as He. She shut both eyes and measured her thumbs carefully side by side, and put the tips of her fingers together as Miss Hawksleigh had taught her: "Pray God, let that little girl in the red frock show me what she has in her pocket," she said.

Then she opened her eyes and looked expectantly.

What she asked for was not given as she confidently expected; yet something was given. For the lonely little girl happened to be looking full at Lady Mary, and when the blue eyes opened, eagerly questioning, upon hers, she smiled.

As the carriage whirled the occupants of the Court pew homewards, the villagers courtesying and touching hats as it passed, Lady Mary, sitting by her father with her back to the horses, caught sight of little Red Frock, still alone, by the way-side. She had her hand in her pocket, Lady Mary saw, and she did not walk sedately as was decorous on Sundays, but advanced after a fashion of her own, with little runs and skips and hoppings.

"I wish I might walk home from church like other little girls," Lady Mary said; but naturally no one took notice of that ridiculous remark.

Before another Sunday a school-treat was given at the Rectory, and to this Lady Mary and her governess were invited. It was only out of consideration for the feelings of the Rectory people, that the Earl's daughter was permitted to be present. Danger of measles, fevers, coughs, rashes, disagreeables of all kinds lurked in the neighbourhood of the village children. Miss Hawksleigh grasped her charge tightly by the hand as she piloted her about the grounds, or held her at her knees, safely removed from the happy crowd in the meadow,

who played at "kiss in the ring," or, songfully, went gathering "nuts in May."

"I wish to go to speak to that little girl in red," the child said fretfully, and again and again she tried to twist her slender hand from the close grasp.

"You will do nothing of the sort, Mary," the governess always said.

Beyond the light railing which divided the field where the children played from the Rectory garden, a little figure sauntered, ran, jumped alone—a little figure in a crimson dress and in a battered hat, and with ever a sly inviting smile at the beautiful vision just beyond reach.

"If you want to play, you can play with Eveline Hopson," Miss Hawksleigh repeatedly said in response to the futile wrigglings of the hand she held.

"I do not wish to play with Eveline," Lady Mary always made answer, "I wish to play with the little girl in the red frock." Eveline Hopson, for her part, wished to play at "Tag" with the school-children; but she had been told off by her mother to dance attendance on the little lady from the Court. Eveline was sulky in consequence, and held herself aggrievedly aloof, looking, contemptuous-eyed, upon the younger child in her delicate raiment, calling her "Ninny" in her heart.

There had come in the carriage with Lady Mary a large box of toys to be run for, jumped for, hopped for by the school-children. Lady Mary must herself give the prizes, Mrs. Hopson said. They were not given till after tea, and Lady Mary was tired of waiting, her hot hand for ever clasped in the hand of Miss Hawksleigh.

"Let her stand on the other side of the table, please," Miss Hawksleigh stipulated when the hour came. Even so she was not at ease, but it was good to have a yard of stout deal between her charge and contamination.

The table was heaped with a collection of toys which attracted the whole crowd of delighted children, pointing, laughing, whispering together. There were knives and work-boxes, dolls, desks, grocers' shops, stables with horses, red and black, standing in their stalls. It was arranged that every child should have a toy, but that to those who had won in the races the best should be given.

Among them all was one plaything which attracted Lady Mary's eye. It was a sturdy little pony in a brown skin, harnessed, with shining, black harness adorned with tiny silver buckles, to a yellow-painted cart. Many a time as an eager recipient touched his forelock or dropped a courtesy on the other side of the table, Mrs. Hopson would have put that particular toy into Lady Mary's hand. The child always motioned it away: "Give me something else," she said. Till the clergyman's wife, willing to please the child and thinking she coveted the toy herself, put the horse and cart away beneath the table-cloth.

But when nearly all had been given, there came sidling up to the table a little girl in a red frock, with elf-black locks, a finger in her mouth, and a sly look of recognition at Lady Mary.

"The horse and cart, if you please," Lady Mary said at once, "I wish to give it to this little girl."

It was fished out from under the table again and put in her hand. She had looked tired and spiritless the moment before, but she leant across the table now with her face all smiles. A little, eagerly shaking, red hand was put out to grasp the wonderful toy: "Is it better than what you had in your pocket?" they heard Lady Mary whisper to the cottage child.

Miss Hawksleigh—Lady Mary still on the safe side of the deal table, the Hopson family around her—had been decoyed away to look at a new sweet-pea of which the rector was proud. Returning, a specimen blue bloom in her hand, the governess found the table deserted, the Hopsons playing "In and out the Windows" with the school-children, Lady Mary nowhere to be seen.

Hardly five minutes had elapsed—not time for much mischief to be done. Time enough for Lady Mary to fly to the side of little Red Frock, sitting alone by the iron railings, her new toy in her lap.

"Do you like it?" Lady Mary inquired, breathless with her run and the excitement of the escape. "I like it the best of all. I kept it for you."

"BEYOND LADY MARY'S WESTERN BOUNDARY WAS THE SIDE AISLE WHERE THE SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN SAT."

Red Frock nodded. She had spread a tiny square of handkerchief, red, spotted with white, on the grass beside her, and placing her toy upon it, she tried with clumsy, trembling little hands to fold the handkerchief over the horse and cart. "What you doing it for?" Lady Mary asked.

"So's Dora and Florrie don't see it," Red Frock explained, hoarse and laconic.

"What a pretty handkerchief!" said Lady Mary.

Red Frock nodded acquiescence. "That's my Sunday one," she said; "this ain't Sunday, but it's the Treat."

"Mine is only white," said Lady Mary regretfully; "I have not a Sunday one."

Red Frock had covered the toy, but not to her satisfaction; she kept arranging and rearranging the spotted handkerchief. Lady Mary leant closer to her and caught her by an arm around her neck: "I like you," she said, "I see you in church. Do you see me?"

Red Frock only nodded with her knowing smile. Lady Mary convulsively gripped the neck with her encircling arm: "What have you got in your pocket?" she whispered.

"Somethin'," Red Frock returned evasively. She tried to twist her head free, but the other child held it fast.

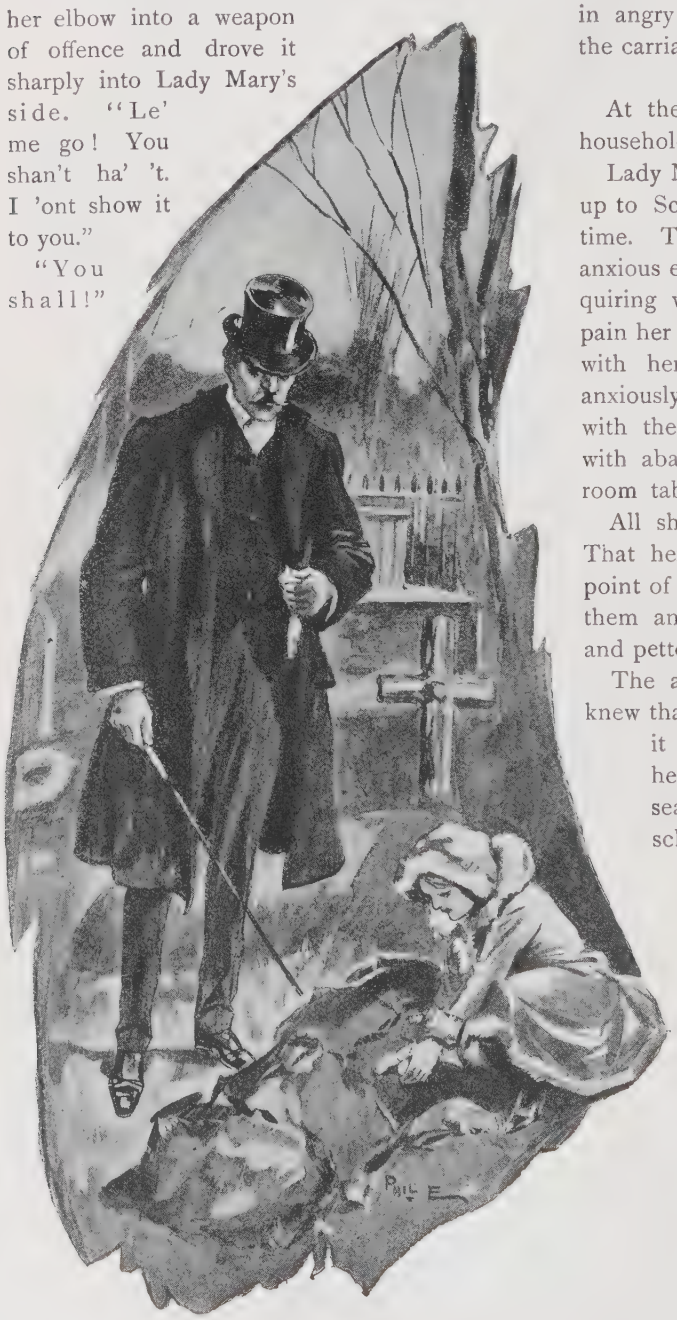
"Is it something you're afraid Florrie and Dora should play with?"

Red Frock nodded: "They can't take it away from me," she said fiercely, in her odd little hoarse voice, "'cause they does'nt know I got it."

"But I would not take it away from you," Lady Mary said insinuatingly. She drew her victim close till the sunburnt little face and her own of lily fairness touched, and the black elf-locks and the shining fair ones mingled. "I would just peep at it with you——"

"You shan't!" Red Frock cried. She made her elbow into a weapon of offence and drove it sharply into Lady Mary's side. "Le' me go! You shan't ha' 't. I 'ont show it to you."

"You shall!"



"LADY MARY STOOPED DOWN AND PLACED THE STONE THERE."

said Lady Mary, whose face was now very pink and angry and determined. "I will see—I will—I will—what you got in your pocket!"

By the time the frightened governess reached the pair, Red Frock, rolling on her back, had fought and kicked herself free. Lady Mary, crumpled, soiled, baffled, blue eyes swimming in angry tears, was captured and taken to the carriage.

At the first breath of the dread word the household at the Court fled.

Lady Mary did not notice that they went up to Scotland six weeks before the usual time. That her parents watched her with anxious eyes, her mother again and again inquiring was her head hot? did her throat pain her? That Miss Hawksleigh, less strict with her than before, yet watched her anxiously too, and once after an interview with the Countess was discovered sobbing with abandonment, her head on the schoolroom table.

All she knew was that they went away. That her big brothers, grown up from her point of view, and no use for play, joined them and teased her, and laughed at her and petted her, as was their custom.

The anxiety passed away, and she never knew that it had existed; the very cause of it was forgotten; and Christmas was here and they were all back for the season at the Court again. The village school had long been re-opened; all the trouble of the summer was forgotten.

Of the six little victims who had been smitten with scarlet fever, developing it but a few days after the school-treat, only one was dead.

On the first Sunday Lady Mary went to church she noticed the empty pew. The holly on the pillars, the sparkling Cross on the pulpit, the legend in scarlet letters on a white ground above the altar, did not keep her attention long.

"Unto us a Child is born"

Yes, but where was the child in the little red frock who had sat solitary in the end pew and played with the mysterious "Somethin'" in her pocket?

* * * * *

They had held with an arm about each other's necks, they had rolled together on the grass; the father and mother were fain to look upon their child's safety as a mercy for which to be deeply grateful—a mercy for which the Earl thought some thank-offering should be made.

On the morning after that Sunday in the holly-decked church, he held his little daughter's hand tightly in his own and walked with her to the cottage where Red Frock had lived and died.

He would not enter the cottage, but held a talk with the bereaved mother at the door. And while the woman courtesied and the Earl promised, while the woman wiped her eyes and the Earl expressed his sympathy, Lady Mary kept a reminding pressure upon her father's hand. At last, as he was turning away, she put all her strength into the squeeze which her slight fingers gave his. Then he stopped, looked doubtfully at the child, and turned back to the woman again.

"My little daughter tells me," he began with embarrassment, for he was shy as well as proud, and held himself always stiffly with his inferiors in station, "tells me your poor little girl had some treasure always carried in her pocket. If you could allow her to see whatever this might be it would—would give Lady Mary much pleasure."

"Certainly, my lord," the woman said.

She went to the mantelpiece, and from among the little tin boxes and bits of china there, took, and rubbed in the cloth with which she had mopped her eyes, a round stone. The stone was a little smaller than a tennis ball and nearly white.

"This is it, my lord," she said. "She was wonnerful set on it. Her 'bowler' she called it. She found it herself i' the stone hape by the road; and the other little gals in our row cou'n't find one so round nor yet so white. She was wonnerful afeard Dora and Florrie, if they knowed about it, should set on her and take it from her; they'd got toys, they had; and my little un hadn't nothin' only this."

She hesitated, looking at the stone, rubbed it again, and held it out to Lady Mary: "If your ladyship would care to take it——?" she said.

* * * * *

Lady Mary walked away soberly at her father's side, that treasure in her pocket.

So that was it. Little Red Frock's hoarded possession; her 'bowler'; her one toy!

"I am going to put up a pretty white cross," the Earl said, "and her name on it, you know. Then you shall go with Miss Hawksleigh to see it."

But Lady Mary would go now, and with him.

Such a tiny grave among the rest! The Earl held his child's hand tighter.

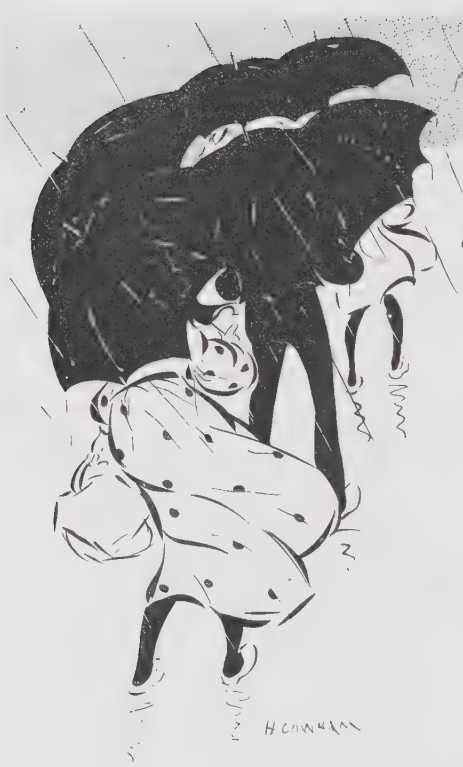
Lady Mary looked at the 'bowler' she held, and looked at the grave, and at the 'bowler' again:

"Father, could you make a little hole?" she said. "Just here please—where her hands would be."

With his stick he raised a flag of grass; the soil was loose and soft, a hole was quickly made.

Then Lady Mary stooped down and placed the stone there, and the Earl replaced the grass.

"It was a very nice 'bowler,'" Lady Mary said reflectively, as they walked away. "But I have so many toys—and it was her only one."



PICNICS AND PICNICKING

By KATHARINE DOUGLAS KING.

Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

THERE is hardly a word that can express a greater number of different ideas than the word picnic. It is elastic enough to include an elaborately served luncheon for twenty or thirty guests, with attendant footmen; a shooting lunch out of doors; and the mere hillside scamper of a few girls and boys with bread and cheese and biscuits in their pockets.

July is the ideal month for picnics in the country, for by that time the weather, for good or bad, is as settled—bar thunderstorms—as ever the English summer weather is likely to be; and, as every one knows, the success of a picnic practically depends upon the weather. But for picnicking by the sea-shore, and for family picnics where the juveniles predominate, August is the best month.

These outings can be organised without any trouble or expense, for the preparations beforehand need only be of the very slightest. Even should rain—that terrible enemy of picnics!—come down in deluges on the appointed day, one is spared the annoyance of seeing one's *menu* wasted, as so often happens with more elaborate outings. The farm mistress, or lodging-house keeper, if she be amiable, will make sausage rolls and little cakes the day before; and these can be eaten at home if the day turns out wet. Meat or egg sandwiches, bread and butter, bread and jam, and what the children call "Grass sandwishes"—*i.e.*, mustard and cress sandwiches or cucumber sandwiches—all these can be cut on the day itself. Buns and fruit—greengages or pears—are much appreciated, and can also be bought on the morning of the picnic.

For boys and girls, especially if there are younger children in the party, it is better not to go too far afield. The carrying of the baskets presents occasional difficulties if the expedition is a "carriageless" one; but with a little management the difficulties will always disappear. Let the children decide for themselves how it is done. Here is one description of a picnic, quite informal, and only arranged the day before it took place.

"I WENT IN THEIR MAIL-CART BECAUSE MY LEGS ARE THIN." —(*p.* 905.)

"WE MADE A LITTLE FIRE WITH FLAMES AND SMOKE ON THE BEACH."

"We settled to have a picnic; it was to be to-morrow. We were at the sea. We walked a mile to another village in the morning. The little ones rode in a goat-cart out. They had a mail-cart and person to wheel them, but they cried to go with the goats, because they like the goats. It was a carriage and pair of goats, and very grand. I went in their mail-cart because my legs are thin, though I am really big. The food was in the mail-cart, except what the grown-ups carried in baskets. There were six grown-ups and eight children, boys and girls.

"We sent the goat-cart back when we got to the place and managed by ourselves coming home. The man of our party carried the tent. We pitched it on the shore and bathed, and we made a little fire with flames and smoke on the beach just to amuse ourselves—not to cook with. Then we had dinner in a shady place in a field behind a hedge, just behind the beach. A table-cloth on the grass and we all sat round. We liked the sausage rolls and greengages best. Then we were photographed by one of the grown-ups who had a little hand Frena, like a Kodak, only not quite. In one photograph we look funny as we had plums in our mouths and didn't know we were being taken.

"Then we ran races in the field for prizes—chocolate, and had a big handicap race for every one, with a big prize. Then we came home along the sands all the way, and had a nice tea with eggs comfortably at home. This was called a picnic—not the tea, but the other part. It was the first picnic I've seen. It was lovely."

A picnic organised on the above simple lines gives immense pleasure. Some might draw the line at "the little fire with flames and smoke on the beach, just to amuse ourselves," on an August day. But it is a fact that most children delight in a fire, whether it be the real orthodox fire over which some boys and girls boil their kettle and cook buttered eggs, or the little fire on the beach, built in the midst of a few stones and intended as a pastime, pure and simple.

Races are always popular and chocolate is much appreciated as a prize. In the country where there are fields or open spaces in woods, "Rounders" is a favourite game. Old as it is, it has not lost its hold on the hearts of boys and girls, girls especially. If the picnic takes place in the heart of a forest, "I spy" is immediately voted for: and a wood, especially at the close of a summer day, is also an ideal spot for "Mad Dog," a terrifying and therefore singularly

"IT IS AN OPEN QUESTION WHETHER A MIXED PICNIC ANSWERS."—
(p. 906.)

"SINCE ELMA'S TURNED HER HAIR UP, SHE'S PUT ON NO END OF AIRS."

popular pastime. The Mad Dog goes out alone to unknown lairs in the adjacent forest. After a given time the rest of the party sally forth. The Mad Dog has the privilege of "bouncing out" without warning upon the adventurers, who are generally paralysed by this manœuvre and fall an easy prey. As in "I spy," to get home untouched counts a win. The Mad Dog cannot be caught. His *rôle* is simply to catch—to terrify first and to catch afterwards. The charm of the game lies in the delicious tremors that assail the party who go out to look for Mad Dog, and this charm is heightened a thousandfold if the game is played at night.

It is an open question whether a mixed picnic answers—that is to say, a picnic in which both children and grown-ups take part. As a rule, perhaps, the children have more fun where the entertainment is exclusively for themselves. A schoolboy's is the following lucid account of a picnic—most enjoyable in its way—but in which he had the misfortune to be a good five years younger than the next youngest member of the party. It was a picnic given by his sisters to some dozen or dozen and a-half of their friends. But let him speak for himself.

"It was the first day of my holidays," he says. "When I heard who was asked, I said I'll hook it; but the mater said I'd better not, and the girls said I was ungrateful—they had waited for my holidays. Rot! They had fixed that old picnic for three different days already in July and the rain stopped it every time.

"When I heard only the girls' friends were coming, I said 'I'll ask Billy Bates.' 'What! that lout of a boy? Indeed you won't!' said the girls. 'It's our picnic; we don't want it crowded up with little boys. Why, we haven't even asked Great-aunt Amelia!'"

"I didn't see where the argument came in, as Great-aunt Amelia is seventy if she's a day, and of course you don't want old people at a picnic. But there!—when I began to point out that Billy Bates was nearer Elma's age than half the men-guests they'd invited—Elma's my youngest sister and only seventeen, but since she's turned up her hair she's put on no end of airs—then they all made a dead set at me—I mean the girls did, and there's four of 'em—and said this was their picnic, and if I wanted my friends I could give a picnic for myself!

"Well, they had their picnic. We drove in a waggonette to the forest five miles off. Milly's—that my eldest sister's—young man drove instead of the coachman, as we were such a tight fit as it was, and of course Milly sat on the box by him. I was shoved away among the hampers at the bottom of the waggonette. They took the long way round as we had people from town and the girls wanted to show them the view, which is supposed to be fine. I saw nothing of it; but then they said it didn't matter; I ought to know it by heart, having lived about the forest all my life. But would they like to be half stifled under a waggonette of people and hampers on a broiling July day?

"I didn't see much about the place we had our grub in—just a bit of forest surrounded

"'IT'S OUR PICNIC; WE DON'T WANT IT CROWDED UP WITH LITTLE BOYS.'"

with trees and bushes. But everybody made no end of fuss, and said 'How idyllic!' 'How charming! how rural!'—as if a forest was anything but rural, silly idiots! We got there first and then the others drove up in pony carts and waggonettes till we were all there. And there was a jabbering and noise, laying the cloth and unpacking the hampers.

"And then they began again, 'What fun to do it all for one's self! How delightful to set one's own lunch and wait on one's self!' All very well! It was 'Fred'—that's me—'Fred run here,' 'Fred go there,' 'Fred do this,' 'Fred do that'—till I was nearly run off my legs and dead beat before we began.

"THERE'S ANOTHER THING THE GIRLS DO WELL—GRUB!"

"I must say the girls manage a picnic well in some things. There was no stiffness. The table-cloth was on the ground, of course, the girls and men carved, and we all sat where we liked. I've been to picnics where you all sit round as stiff as pokers, and where if you flip a grasshopper into your neighbour's gingerbeer nobody laughs. But here there was almost too much noise and laughing. I didn't talk at lunch. Nobody would talk to me if I wanted to.

"There's another thing the girls do well—Grub! These are Milly's three rules for a successful picnic, and I make a present of them to people who want to give picnics. First rule.—Settled weather. H'm! You can't get weather to order. I say, don't give a picnic in July, for it'll only be fine by a fluke. August is a safer month.

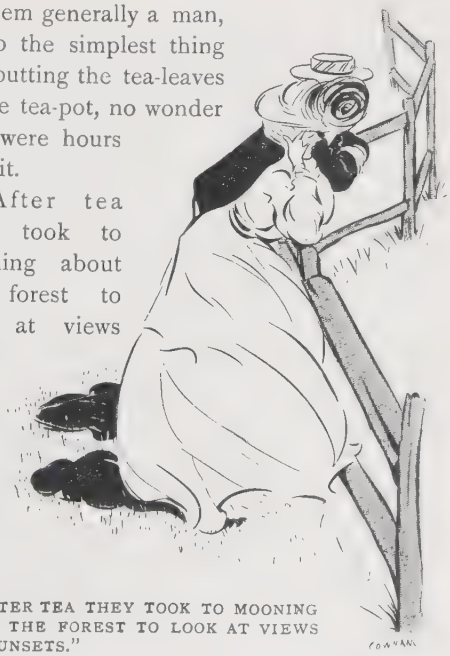
"Second rule.—Mind your guests are well chosen and mix well. Quite right! Yet they ask a lot of folk who just chatter and laugh and talk about themselves and all sorts of foolish things, and won't ask a boy like Billy Bates, who's a most perfect chap for ferretting and fun you ever saw.

"Third rule.—Get good food and plenty of it. Hear, hear! Perhaps that's why people always say they like the girls' picnics: they do have good food. Game pies and patties and cold fowls and tongue and potted meats and salads, not to count the sweets and lighter things to fill up the chinks. Of course if we walk we can't lug about so much food. Then we content ourselves with sandwiches and sausage rolls and hard-boiled eggs.

"I enjoyed the lunch well enough; but after I wished I hadn't come. Not a soul would speak to me. Play games? Not they! After lunch they must all trapse off to a Wishing Well where there was a real gipsy queen. They were mad on having their fortunes told. They must have bribed the old queen well, for they all came back as pleased as Punch.

"Then the girls said it was time to light the fire and make tea. I had to blow at that fire till I was black all over where I wasn't burnt scarlet. It seemed to take 'em about two hours to get tea ready. 'It's such fun doing it all ourselves,' they said. Now one maid or footman would have got that whole tea ready in twenty minutes; but where it always seemed to take at least two people, and one of them generally a man, to do the simplest thing like putting the tea-leaves in the tea-pot, no wonder they were hours over it.

"After tea they took to mooning about the forest to look at views and sunsets."



"AFTER TEA THEY TOOK TO MOONING ABOUT THE FOREST TO LOOK AT VIEWS AND SUNSETS."

and sunsets, until I wished with all my heart I hadn't come and wasted a whole day of my holidays. But I had one bit of fun. I climbed up a tree, and just as Milly and her young man – no, Elma and another young man, only just a mere acquaintance—were passing beneath, I slithered down like a boa constrictor, with a Red Indian yell, right on top of the fellow. What they thought I was I don't know. Elma shrieked and he—yes, he hugged her, all knocked about as he was by my arms and legs, to show he wasn't afraid and would protect her, I suppose. I went off like a streak of greased lightning, and laid low and waited for them all at the bottom of the waggonette among the hampers. I don't know who had packed them up; I hadn't. I expect it was Milly. I must say she works hard, does that girl. If there's anything on like a picnic or a party she always says some one must do the work in these things.

"Well, the moon had come up by the time we started for home. They said the view driving home in the moonlight was perfectly lovely. Precious little I saw of it! Elma's engaged to that young man I jumped down upon in the forest; but I call that picnic a day wasted so far as I was concerned. Wait till I have a picnic! I'll have a different set of people for mine."

From a schoolboy's point of view such a picnic as the above—especially without playfellows—would indeed be considered a day wasted. But it had all the elements of success, and was thoroughly enjoyed by those for whom it was arranged.

But perhaps the most enjoyable picnics after all are those very small and very simple ones where a few friends meet, and taking their lunch in hand-baskets, walk to some favourite spot.

In April cowslipping, in September blackberrying fill many a happy hour. And the rest afterwards on sun-burnt cliffs, within sound of the waves breaking dreamily on the beach below, or on a cool green bank, listening to the larks far above—what unforgettable days the very words recall! He is happy who has some such pleasant memories of out-door joys.

Picnics are said to be going out of fashion; but so long as there is a heart in tune with the universal heart of Nature, the delights of wood or cliff or shore will never fade.

Nature by the Brookside

by R. B. Lodge.

With special Photographs by the Author.

"I come from haunts of coot and hern,
I make a sudden sally,
And sparke out among the fern,
To bicker down a valley."

THE little beck among the wolds which still "bubbles into eddying bays and babbles on the pebbles" just as it did when the poet drew inspiration from the common scenes around his Lincolnshire home—

"For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on for ever"

has many a counterpart. Hundreds of nameless streams, all unknown to fame, hurry along—

"To join the brimming river."

Some

"Wind about and in and out"

through the wolds like Tennyson's "Brook," and others wander through the Yorkshire Dales like that in the "Water-Babies."

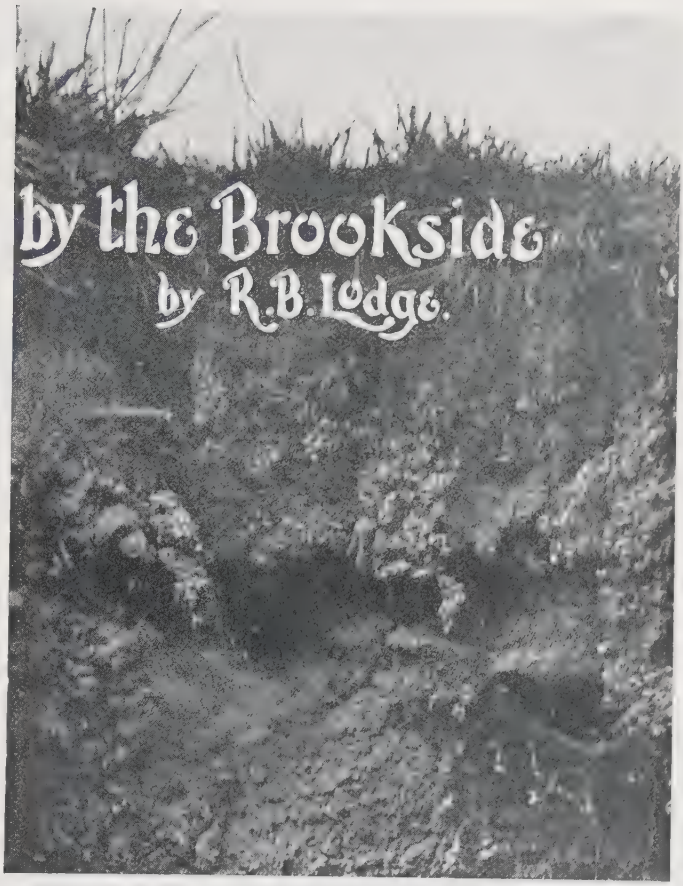
"Clear and cool, clear and cool,
By laughing shallow and dreaming pool,
Cool and clear, cool and clear,
By shining shingle and foaming weir."

Through the pleasant west country valleys trickle bewitching streamlets amid osmunda and harts-tongue, while the water ouzel flits from one mossy boulder to another, and the spotted trout dimple the glassy surface between the eddying runs. Whatever their locality it is delightful to follow them in their tortuous and erratic career.

All the wild life of the country around seems to be attracted to the brook-side, and more glimpses and pictures of nature are to be seen there than anywhere else. Artists and poets, sportsmen and naturalists, all feel the glamour of the brook, and are attracted to its banks. The last two perhaps may enjoy to the full all the magic and the mystery of what they see, but are unable to express their feelings in articulate language; as Kingsley truly enough says:—

"They hold their tongues about their own feelings, simply because they have never been driven by emptiness of pocket to look round for methods of expressing them. And, after all, how much of nature can you express?"

Kingsley himself, by-the-by, partook of the nature of all four in his own person, and his insight into nature was far deeper and truer than



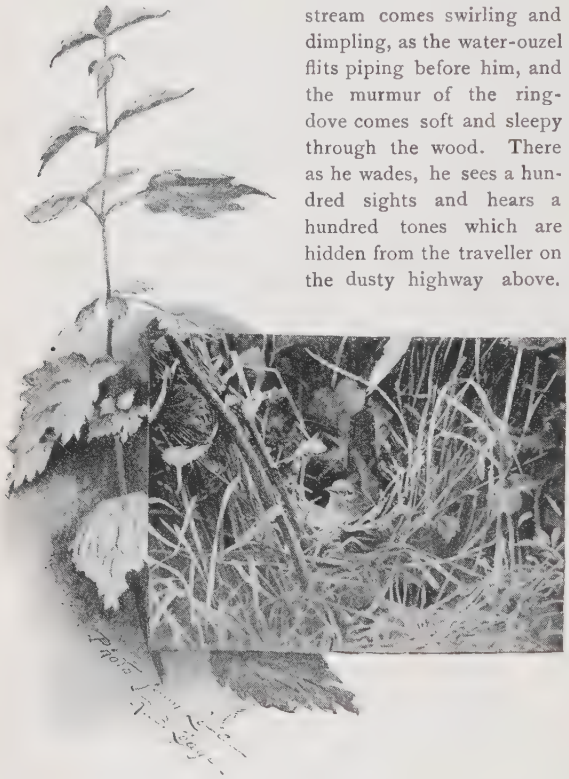
A KINGFISHER'S NEST.

The kingfisher's nesting-hole is in a bank, whence it speeds with its prey.

Tennyson's. Many of his word pictures are exquisite, and perfect in their artistic charm.

He pictures in "Prose Idylls" a Yorkshire stream thus :—

"Dearer than wild cataracts or Alpine glens are the still hidden streams which Bewick has immortalised in his vignettes, and Creswick in his pictures: the long glassy shallow, paved with yellow gravel where he wades up between low walls of fern-fringed rock, beneath nut and oak and alder, to the low bar over which the stream comes swirling and dimpling, as the water-ouzel flits piping before him, and the murmur of the ring-dove comes soft and sleepy through the wood. There as he wades, he sees a hundred sights and hears a hundred tones which are hidden from the traveller on the dusty highway above.



THE NIGHTINGALE SITTING.

Where the stream enters the little wood, and is for a space lost to sight amid briars and brambles, the nest of the nightingale is sure to be placed.

The traveller fancies that he has seen the country, so he has; the outside of it at least, but the angler only sees the inside. The angler only is brought face to face with the flower, the bird, and insect life of the rich river banks, the only part of the landscape where the hand of man has never interfered, and the only part in general which never feels the drought of summer, 'the trees planted by the waterside whose leaf shall not wither.'"

Many streamlets there are too, on too small a scale to offer any attractions to the angler, but which in a humble way are full of quiet pleasure to the nature-lover. For trout we may find nothing but sticklebacks and minnows and such small fry; and water-rats take the place of otters. Depending often on the surface water from the surrounding fields, these streamlets are too apt to run dry during the hot summer months, but during winter they carry off no inconsiderable rainfall, which swells them temporarily into miniature torrents. These winter freshets carve out for themselves in the soft soil cliffs of ten and twelve feet high, over which the interlacing branches of alder and hornbeam, hazel and blackthorn, meet in intricate luxuriance, casting chequered shadows on the stream below, so dwindled and dried up by the summer drought as to have scarcely strength to trickle over its dry and shingly bed.

THE PARENT KINGFISHER, PERCHED ON A BOUGH, MEDITATES ON THE WORRIES OF HOUSE-KEEPING.

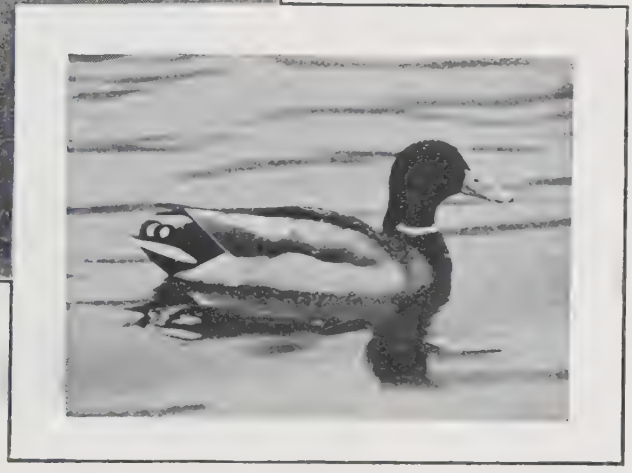
Here the wagtails trip with dainty steps, and the kingfisher flashes past with shrill

MR. BRER RABBIT HEARS NOISES.

His anxious eye tells us that he detects the proximity of a human on the banks of the stream on which he makes his home.

alarm, as it speeds to its nesting-hole in the bank with some finny prey. With patience we may perhaps see the half-fledged brood perched on some overhanging spray near the nest being fed by the parent bird. A sight to be treasured by the privileged observer as a memory of delight.

"THE COUNTRY AROUND IS COVERED WITH ITS SNOWY MANTLE, AND A HARD FROST BINDS ALL THE PONDS AND DITCHES."



THE MALLARD, HAVING AN AFTERNOON TO SPARE, SETS OUT TO TEA AND A GOSSIP WITH A NEIGHBOURING DUCK.

In these high banks, especially where the stream has laid bare the twisted roots of trees, the rabbits thrive and multiply exceedingly, making well-defined "runs" from the holes along the banks and into the adjacent fields.

A surprising number of water-hens nest along the banks of such streams. Very clever they are in evading notice and in hiding their nests under the shelving banks amid the roots or among such a tangled mass of brambles and wild-roses as to defy all search. Now and again one of the birds may be surprised on turning a corner quickly, when, if it cannot dive and seek safety under water, it will rise and flap along the surface until a chance offers of dodging into some thick bush or other shelter. The young ones, even when hardly more than a day old, when they look exactly like little black puff balls, are very expert in hiding and remaining perfectly motionless until the danger has passed. Sometimes a nest may be seen in an isolated tuft of rushes or small clump of reeds, when the usual lining is composed of dead oak leaves neatly arranged.

THIS SLIGHT RUDE PLATFORM OF STICKS BARELY SERVES TO HOLD THE TWO PEARLY-WHITE TURTLE-DOVE'S EGGS.

inarticulate murmur of the water babbling over the stones. For with the cares and duties of housekeeping the matchless melody of the parent birds has ceased.

Now, too, the voice of the turtle is heard in the land; the favourite resort of these birds is the line of alders and small trees which mark the course of the stream as it winds along the bottom of the valley. Here the slight rude platform of sticks which barely serves to hold the two pearly-white eggs may be found.

THE TURTLE DOVE.

Though he bills and coes, he is very wide awake.

Many a brood of wild ducks are hatched off here, the eggs in their downy bed being carefully hidden under a bramble or amid nettles sometimes at a considerable distance from water. No bird is more heedless of danger or more courageous in protecting her young than a wild duck.

THE NEST OF THE WATER-HEN.

These birds cleverly hide their nests amid roots or brambles to defy all search.

It is by the stream side in early spring that the bushes are first clothed in fresh leaves of tenderest green, and where we look with confidence for the first primrose; and here the earliest violets modestly nestle in the warm and sheltered corners. Here, too, in mid-April the first nightingale will be heard. And where the stream enters the little wood, and is for a space lost to sight amid briars and brambles, the nest is sure to be placed; the first sound to greet the unfledged songsters of future years being the

The brook-side is not only bright with many flowers but alive with brightly coloured butter-

flies. Brilliant blues and coppers flit from grass-stem to grass-stem, and delicate orange tips dance lightly in the sunshine, taking their siesta in the mid-day heat on the umbels of cow-parsley which tower above the rich grass. But though the flower is so conspicuous, the butterfly has suddenly and unaccountably become invisible. Can it know that its closed under wings are exactly the colour of the greenish white flowerheads, and that its mottled markings reproduce so wonderfully the innumerable flowerets? It certainly seems as if this remarkable protective resemblance was fully understood and appreciated.

On the under-surface of the alder and blackthorn leaves may be found, if one searches carefully in May, long green eggs like miniature ninepins. Under the microscope they may be seen to be beautifully fluted. They are the eggs of the lovely Brimstone butterfly, and will shortly hatch into green caterpillars. These will in due time turn into elongated green chrysalids from which the perfect butterfly will be hatched in June. This is of the colour of the primrose, and its body is clad with a silvery white fur or down.

In well-nigh every bed of nettles are colonies of spiny black caterpillars; these become very beautiful chrysalids slung up by the tail under a little tent or umbrella of nettle leaves. Their curious angular forms are brilliantly gilded with metallic gold apparently, and for a few days before hatching the colours of the future butterfly are plainly to be seen through the transparent envelope. The broad bands of bright scarlet show them to be Red Admirals, which through the late summer and into the autumn months are so conspicuous as they poise over the flower heads in the bright sunshine, and lazily open and shut their splendid wings as if to display their beauty.

This metallic decoration among insects is not uncommon. Besides the pupal stage of the Tortoiseshells, Red Admirals, and Peacock Butterflies may be noticed the Burnished Brass Moth, whose wings are most accurately described by its popular name. The family of Frittillaries is ornamented with silver on the under-wings. The largest species has its wings washed with silver and the smaller members carry inlaid plates of burnished silver arranged in rows of square spots on their under-wings.

In the height of summer the deeper pools which still retain some water are frequented by thirsty birds which wash and drink in glad thankfulness; and in the depth of winter too, when the country around is covered with its snowy mantle and a hard frost binds all the ponds and ditches, the edges of the running streams provide food, drink, and shelter for many a bird which otherwise would perish miserably of cold and want. Then the snipe are all frozen out of their marshy resorts and probe their long beaks in the still soft mud, and the ducks and teal fly nightly to the unfrozen pools until they are driven to the coast and its tidal estuaries.

THE PERKY CHAFFINCH.

The Red-Headed Twins.

By MARGARET WESTRUP.

Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE, R.I.

I.

THE Red-Headed Twins were an institution in Elswick. Their names were properly Toby and James, but a facetious uncle by his wit had rendered James absolutely obsolete, and Toby also, in its proper pronunciation. It was when he was shown two red-headed fat bundles of white stuff and embroidery, out of which four startlingly blue eyes stared gravely up into his face, that he had said, "which is To be, and which is Not to be?"

That sort of bad joke clings. It had clung to the Twins, and they grew up under the pseudonyms of Tobee and Nottobee. They did not seem to mind. Their red heads jogged along always close together, and always happy till they reached what an officious aunt considered years of discretion. And years of discretion meant a governess. They had no mother. They had a father who spent a great deal of his time under hedges and in ditches.

Sometimes he let them come into the ditches with him, and the Twins revelled in mud, and chuckled. Their father got strange things out of the ditches. Generally they were such little things that you couldn't see them at all without looking through a shining brass thing, and then they looked quite big.

A governess came. She was small and dressed in black, and she looked scared. The Twins patronised her: but they did not do any lessons. They took walks as of yore in the village, and the governess ran after them. The village people smiled and shook their heads, but not one would give the Twins away. The governess was near-sighted, so perhaps that was why she never saw two flaming heads, side by side, like two gorgeous flowers growing on the hedges by the roadside. For many times, the Twins seeing her coming, burrowed through the hedges into the fields beyond. They would come home when they were hungry with big scratches down their noses and across their cheeks, and listen gravely to their governess's distracted scolding. Her usual punishment was dry bread and water for dinner. The dry bread disappeared with miraculous swiftness; and when it had disappeared the Twins disappeared too, down into the pantry, through the pantry window, which they could open by an ingenious method of their own from the outside. The bread was given to the little birds.

Sometimes the governess went, shaking with nervousness to the Twins' father, and the Twins climbed on to the window-sill and looked and listened. The interview which followed was always very much the same: the governess apologetic and nervous at disturbing Mr. Thackford; Mr. Thackford always, though abstractedly, courteous; and it invariably ended in his telling her to send the Twins to him.

But by that time the Twins had vanished, and in the afternoon, when they reappeared, their father's wrath, never very keen, had lost its edge. And when the Twins' red heads lit up his study, and the Twins' blue eyes questioned him gravely, he was apt to forget their delinquencies. But he knew his duty, so he would begin: "You are very tiresome boys!"

The Twins waited for more.

"I really ought to cane you," with a shrinking glance at a whip hanging on the wall.

"Where's the cane?" said Tobee.

"Where?" said Nottobee.

"Why are you so naughty?" the father would ask pathetically.

The Twins at this point always twisted their blue overalls into a rope while they considered. The point was an interesting one. Tobee generally answered somewhat in this wise, "Hedgehogs, an' dogs, an' frogs, an' toads, an' field-mouses, an' snails, an' cattle-pillys don't do any lessons."

This answer interested their father, and he would begin a lecture to show that all animals and insects had to learn, and the Twins would listen with grave interest. By the time the lecture was over their delinquencies were forgotten.

So after a while the governess, being possessed of a conscience, took her departure. The Twins superintended her packing, and saw her to the

station. They even picked her a bunch of flowers between them that was composed of heads without stalks and stalks without heads. Furthermore, they offered her one of their pet snails as a parting gift. The poor little governess as she looked from her carriage window at the red-headed morsels of humanity who had worsted her, felt a queer pang somewhere in her left side, and a tear dropped with a splash on to the bunch of stalks and heads she held in her hand. The Twins turned gravely from the station and set out for a walk.

"B'lieve she didn't want to go 'way," said Tobee soberly.

"We just had to send her away," said Nottobee.

They made their way through the village rather silently. But then the Twins were often silent. All the dogs in the place, catching sight of the glint of their red heads, came running to meet them, and it was with a queue of dogs of all sorts and sizes and shapes, but no pedigrees, that the Twins took their walk. This always happened; the queue varying in length, but always there, more or less, as the case might be.

At the end of the afternoon Tobee gave a deep chuckle, "No ole gov'ness," he said.

"No ole gov'ness," repeated Nottobee.

And the faces of the Twins crinkled up into joyous beams that shone even through the mud that lay thick upon them from toe to ruddy head.

II.

That was how the first governess was disposed of.

The next was a different sort of person altogether. She was big and bony, and her hands hurt when she clutched hold of your shoulder, just as you were slipping from the room.

But the Twins did not have a bad time in the days that followed, for the new governess had no conscience to speak of, and for the most part sat and read novels and ate sweets, while the Twins roamed wild. But she objected strongly to their bringing hedgehogs and frogs and toads and snails and such pets into the schoolroom, and it was a snail which brought about her dismissal.

He was a very fine snail and quite tame, and he lived in the Twins' own bit of garden, and he was often brought into the house on a visit, and was altogether a very well-behaved snail. But this governess objected to his being brought into the schoolroom, She objected to all the best things in the world, according to the Twins' way of regarding matters. Moreover, the Twins had a nasty worried feeling about a good many things lately that puzzled them. This kind of thing:—The governess one day was reading a book with a yellow cover, and they were playing leap-frog; and their father came into the room, and the governess slipped the book beneath a cushion, and she said, "I thought it better to give them a half-holiday, Mr. Thackford, Tobee looked so pale, and did not seem at all well," then she turned to Tobee, "do you feel better now, darling?" she said.

Tobee gazed at her with wide, puzzled eyes. Nottobee gazed too.

"They don't seem very bad," said their father smiling.

"We *never* was," said Tobee wonderingly.

The governess smiled, "They'd never own it," she said, "they're *so* plucky!"

And there were the occasions when she gave

"THE GOVERNESS WAS NEAR-SIGHTED."—(*p.* 914.)

them sweets. The Twins liked sweets, but there were always strange conditions attached to the governess's sweets which they did not like, without knowing why. And then she always called them "dear" and "darling" before people, and she never did when they were alone. On the whole the Twins were relieved that she didn't, but they wished she would not do it at all. So they were very decided that she must go away.

And she did. For one day the Twins brought their snail into the schoolroom for a morning visit. The governess had expected a letter that morning, and it had not come, and she was in a very bad temper. She was standing by the open window when the Twins and the snail entered the room. The Twins put a big chestnut leaf on the table, and set the snail on the leaf. The governess looked round, her mouth set in a thin line. She approached the table, reached a long arm over the down-bent heads, seized the snail and flung him straight out of the window. There was just a moment of bewildered silence. Then comprehension seized on the Twins, and they turned on her faces red with such wild horror and grief that even she felt uncomfortable.

"You—beast," panted Tobee, and then they turned and flung themselves down the stairs and out into the garden. Their pet had fallen on the asphalt playground, and—well, he was not a pretty sight. But the Twins put a leaf under his remains and gently lifted him from the ground. They took him to their father: "Is—he—dead?" Tobee asked laboriously.

"Yes, my boy," answered his father, gently.

"*Ker-wite*?" said Nottobee, with a last forlorn hope.

Their father looked gravely at the little mass of jelly and shell and said, "Yes."

There was a pause.

"How did it happen?" asked Mr. Thackford.

The Twins swallowed hard, then they swallowed again; then both looked away from the remains on the leaf on the table, and their blue eyes flashed, and their faces grew scarlet, and Tobee cried, "I'll throw *her* out of the window!" and Nottobee at the same time cried, "I'll smash *her* dead!" And then in a fiery jumble they told the tale. Mr. Thackford was very angry. Above all things he had taught his children to be kind to animals, but still he knew that his gardener killed off many snails every week, and that some people have no respect for such things as snails. But it hurt him when Tobee looked at him with an oddly wistful gaze and said heavily, "I didn't know there was such cruel persons in the world, dad, did you?" And Nottobee's gaze echoed Tobee's words.

Mr. Thackford tried to smooth matters down, but he felt strangely incompetent. He realised that the Twins would have to learn many things as the days went on, and there was no mother to explain. He wondered how it was that they had not seen Jones slaying the snails. He did not know that Jones dodged and manœuvred and lived with the fear of discovery hanging over his head.

In the end the governess had to go. The Twins disliked her so heartily, and refused so stubbornly to go near her, that she had to go.

This time they did not superintend the packing, nor pick their governess a bunch of flowers, nor offer her a snail, nor go to the station to see her off. But when she had gone they found a yellow-backed book of hers, and silently and in the most methodical way they pulled and tore it to bits, till the schoolroom floor was strewn with paper and yellow cardboard.

III.

Then the third came.

The Twins hated all governesses now with a bitterer hatred than before. In fact, to be exact, they had not hated them at all before. They had merely despised them as necessary evils, to be shunned as much as possible.

This governess was different from the others. She was tall and she did not look a bit frightened, and her dress made a nice noise as she moved.

Somehow the Twins' hearts sank as they eyed her gravely that first evening. She leant back in the chair the governesses always sat in, and looked at the two immovable blue-overalled, red-headed figures standing at such a discreet distance, and into her grey eyes there crept a twinkle.

"You hate governesses, don't you?" she said.

"Yes," said the Twins together.

"I don't like them much myself," said this new governess, "but they are a necessary evil, you know; they've got to be put up with."

"We send them 'way off very soon," said Tobee, in a puzzled little way.

"We do," said Nottobee.

The new governess smiled. When she smiled she had a little hole in one cheek low down by her mouth. The Twins wondered what made that hole. "I don't fancy you will send me away, my Twins," she said.

A doubt lurked somewhere in the Twins' minds, so their asseveration that they *would* w is anxiously eager.

Presently Tobee observed, "You're diff'rent to the others."

"Yes, you are," said Nottobee.

"Am I?"

"You're—you're just not like a gov'ness a bit," cried the Twins in agitated chorus.

The twinkle died out in the grey eyes opposite, and something crept into them that drew the Twins a step nearer. "Shall we forget for this evening that I am a governess?" she said.

The Twins twisted their overalls in doubt, and pondered.

"I get tired of being a governess sometimes," she said. "Shall we just be friends to-night?"

This surprised the Twins, but they liked it. Tobee thought a while, then he said, "Would you like to see our mice? We've two white ones an' a brown one, an' a black and white one."

Miss Travis thought mice were ugly little things with unbaked tails, but she said she would like to see them very much indeed. And she looked at them, and stroked one, and even sat quite still, when, as a crowning compliment, they put a horrid little white, pink-eyed, raw-tailed mouse in her lap. She suggested that the mouse looked tired and

"'I THINK,' SAID MISS TRAVIS, 'I'D RATHER HAVE A HUSBAND WITH A LITTLE HAIR ON HIS HEAD.'"—(*p.* 918.)

"Will," asked Tobee cautiously, "will you tell us a tale and ask us how to spell some of the words?"

"No."

"Will," said Nottobee, "you say a man went into a shop with sixpence and bought things, and how much did he have left?"

"No."

"Will," began Tobee, but the governess, whose name, by the way, was Miss Travis, interrupted, "My dear Twins," she said, "do you think I don't know what fair play is?"

wanted to go to bed, and the suggestion took effect, much to her relief.

The Twins showed her all their treasures; but the next morning they were missing when the lesson-hour arrived.

As the days passed they found this governess was not so easy to elude as her two predecessors had been. She was quick enough to discover that where dogs were there would the Twins be also, which simplified matters for her considerably. Then she swept into Mr. Thackford's study in a very different way from her poor little predecessor

but one's, and demanded all his attention and got it. Mr. Thackford bestirred himself. He came often to the schoolroom, and the Twins grew desperate.

They put their red heads together one morning down in the coal-cellar, and pondered forlornly and with deep earnestness.

"I just can't think of no way to send her 'way," said Nottobee sadly.

"I will," said Tobee resolutely; "I just *will!*"

So he sat and thought.

In the midst of his think the butler came and hauled them out of their hiding-place. The Twins in outraged silence bit and kicked, but the butler was a big man, and he hauled them up by their overalls, gave the overalls a neat twist, and so carried them off. It was this kind of thing that hurt the Twins more than anything; morally, not physically, for hitherto the servants had all been on their side, and now, since the advent of the new governess, they were on hers.

Perhaps it was the impetus given by the butler's unjust act that caused Tobee to conceive the brilliant inspiration that came to him while he was studying what he persisted in calling a "rocking-horse" in his spelling-book. He confided his inspiration to Nottobee at the first opportunity. "We must marry her to a man," he said.

Nottobee gasped at the brilliancy of the idea.

"Pretty ladies always marry a man," said Tobee with an air of wisdom.

"So do ugly ones, don't they?" said Nottobee, "Mrs. Browne is ugly."

"It's mostly the pretty ones," said Tobee, "and when ladies marry they go away and live with their husbands."

Nottobee nodded.

"We'll just have to send her 'way!" he said.

"We will, she—she's dreadful vexin'."

Then they fell to thinking of suitable husbands.

"There's Mr. Green," said Tobee, "it'd be awful nice to marry a husband that kept a sweet-shop."

"An' we'd go and see her then," said Nottobee, "we'd go lots."

"Yes; because she's awful nice when she isn't a gov'ness."

"P'raps she'd be a gov'ness just the same," suggested Nottobee.

This troubled them. So when next they were captured by Miss Travis, Tobee asked her earnestly, "Is a lady that's married a husband a gov'ness?"

"Not as a rule," said Miss Travis.

"Would you be?" queried Nottobee.

"No!" said the governess very decidedly.

Tobee looked at Nottobee and they crinkled up their faces with a deep chuckle of joy.

Miss Travis suddenly spread out her arms, and caught both red heads in an embrace, "You're positively the *quaintest* little mortals!" she said kissing each head.

The Twins wriggled out of her arms and rubbed the tops of their heads.

"Would you like to marry a husband?" said Nottobee, insinuatingly.

"It depends on the husband a good deal," said Miss Travis.

"Mr. Green's a *very* nice man," said Tobee solemnly.

"And he sells big red round drops," said Nottobee eagerly.

"Oh," said Miss Travis, "and you think Mr. Green would make me a good husband?"

Both heads nodded vigorously.

"An' you wouldn't have to pay for any of the sweets, you see," said Tobee, his blue eyes glistening.

"Not even the choclit bars," said Nottobee.

"That would certainly be charming," said Miss Travis, "and what made you choose such a nice husband for me?"

The Twins picked up their overalls to twist.

"You see," said Tobee after a pause for twisting and thought, "we like you—when you're not a gov'ness," he added eagerly.

"Yes, we do," said Nottobee.

"I see," said Miss Travis.

The next day the three went for a walk together. They passed a tiny shop whose window was filled with a red, a white, and a golden square, which squares represented the big, round, red drops Nottobee had spoken of so lovingly; acid drops and toffee. A man, round and bald-headed, was standing in the doorway.

"That's Mr. Green!" whispered the Twins excitedly.

The little hole in Miss Travis's cheek was coming and going, "Well," she said, "I think I'd rather have a husband with a little hair on his head."

The Twin's faces fell.

"It's—it's nice to see the flies walk about on it," suggested Tobee anxiously.

But Miss Travis shook her head.

The Twins could hardly blame her. "I do like *some* hair," said Tobee.

"Like Mr. Burke's," said Nottobee.

But Mr. Burke, who possessed a beautiful yellow fringe of hair all round his head encircling a bald crown, was married already.

The Twins fled the next morning and crept into a haystack to further discuss matters.

"There's Mr. White," said Nottobee tentatively.

"He's awful nasty, an' she's rather nice, you see," objected Tobee.

They screwed their overalls into knots and pondered.

"Mr. Jenkins!" cried Tobee at last, "*he's* got hair, an' he has *dear* little pigs!"

But it was that very hair that was the difficulty again. Miss Travis objected to the grease with which Mr. Jenkins sought to beautify his black curls.

"P'raps he'd wash it off if you asked him," Tobee suggested doubtfully.

"An' his little pigs have *very* curly tails," said Nottobee eagerly.

But Miss Travis shook her head.

So the Twins resorted to another haystack and pondered once more. A terrier with only one eye crept in with them and sat and listened with a horribly knowing expression. A collie (by courtesy) and a yellow dog, that even by courtesy can be called nothing, waited outside.

Presently across the fields two tall figures hove in sight. "There they are," said one, and she smiled.

But the man did not smile.

"I'm ashamed of the trouble they give you," he said.

They reached the haystack, and Miss Travis sighed. "Poor little souls, can you wonder they prefer this? What a pity it is that one cannot absorb learning as one does one's food. It seems all wrong to me somehow—children should not have to learn."

He frowned in puzzled thought.

"Yet—" he said.

"Oh, yes, I know!" impatiently, "as things are they must learn, of course, but things should not be as they are if I could alter them."

He smiled. "You are daring, aren't you,?"

"I would be to give children a good time."

"But don't they say that . . . ?"

"Oh, yes, I daresay they do, but I don't believe it, do you?"

"No," he said.

They laughed.

"But meantime," said Miss Travis, and now she was serious again, "things being as they are, discipline must be maintained."

"It must," said Mr. Thackford.

So the Twins were hauled out, and carried off home to the schoolroom. In the schoolroom two great carved oak chairs that properly belonged to the hall downstairs, awaited them.

The Twins regarded these chairs with grave interest.

Their father tied them securely one in each chair, and the Twins submitted in dignified silence.

IV.

After this outrage they were more than ever determined to get rid of their governess.

They trotted in business-like silence through the village, followed by their queue of dogs, and studied all the grown-up males. There weren't many, and most of them were married. There were a good many more women than men. The Twins were brought face to face with this fact, and Tobee said earnestly, "I wish ladies married each other."

They put it at last to Miss Travis, "I s'pose you wouldn't like to marry a nice *lady*?" said Tobee insinuatingly.

"Well, no, I think I'd prefer a man," said Miss Travis.

"She's *very* nice, and she has little brown dots all over her arms, and she wears a *very* clean pinnyfore, and *lots* of hair and no grease on it," said Tobee breathlessly.

"An' she opens her mouth in a great big dark hole when she laughs," added Nottobee desperately.

But Miss Travis obstinately preferred a man.

One morning the Twins met a new young man in the village. He was tall and thin, and he wore spectacles.

"And who are you, my little men?" he said, stopping and peering amiably down at the two blue-overalled figures before him.

"I'm Tobee."

"I'm Nottobee."

The young man looked rather puzzled.

"Who are you?" asked Tobee, breaking the puzzled pause.

"I'm Mr. Cartwright, the new curate, my little men."

A light shone simultaneously on the Twins' faces.

"Are you married to a wife?" cried Tobee eagerly.

"No, I'm not," said the curate blushing.

"Are you going to *live* here?"

"Yes, my boy, I am."

The Twins gave a deep and joyous chuckle.

"Would you mind just takin' off your hat, Mr. Cartwheel?" Tobee asked earnestly.

The curate was puzzled, but the Twins' instant appreciation of him was flattering. He took off his hat with an amiable smile.

"If you wouldn't mind just stoopin' a little bit?" suggested Tobee politely, standing on the tips of his toes and gazing anxiously upwards.

The curate bent obligingly, and the Twins eagerly examined his head.

"An' you don't put grease on your head, do you?" asked Tobee anxiously.

"Why, no, my little man," said the curate.

The Twins looked at each other and drew a long breath of relief. Then they chuckled and crinkled their faces up in glee.

Then Tobee turned politely to the curate. "Would you please just come home with us?" he said. And he took firm hold of the curate's right arm, while Nottobee trotted round and gripped his left.

The curate looked down on the red heads bewilderedly. This sudden affection was almost disconcerting.

"Come 'long," said Tobee in business like tones.

"I am going up this road," said the curate, "so we will go together: where do you live, my little fellow?" They told him, then marched on in silence. They answered his questions as briefly as they possibly could, but otherwise maintained a deep silence.

At the garden gate they came upon Miss Travis. It was a holiday, so the Twins' consciences, or the blanks that stood in the place of their consciences, were quite clear.

Miss Travis was leaning over the gate, with her elbow resting on the top bar, and her chin in the palm of her hand. Her grey eyes were looking out, out into the distance, and they were rather sad. But then governesses do not find life a very gay affair as a rule, especially governesses who have been forced suddenly and very unexpectedly to take to the profession through stress of circumstances. But when Miss Travis's eyes fell upon the queer cavalcade approaching they lit with amusement.

An eager voice hailed her, "Here's Mr. Cart-wheel, Miss Travis, an' he's goin' to live here, an' he isn't bald, and he doesn't put grease on his head——"

"An' he isn't a lady, an' he isn't married!"

This breathless duet left the curate limp and blushing pantilly, but Miss Travis looked quite cool, only her eyes were laughing. "Are you the new curate?" she said pleasantly, "the Twins," with a wave of a white hand towards them, "are an uncertain host—one has to get used to them."

"It is quite so—good morning."

"Have you looked at him properly?" whispered Tobee, and Tobee's whispers were loud and shrill.

The curate took his hint.

"You see, he has lots of hair—look," cried the Twins.

But Miss Travis leant against the gate [illegible]

Instinct told the Twins that this laughter was a bad sign, so far as their projects were concerned. They stood side by side in front of her, and gazed at her with anxious seriousness while she laughed. When she spoke all their hopes were dashed once more to the ground, for Miss Travis averred that she would not care to marry a curate.

Again the Twins could not blame her, for as Tobee said, "I 'spec it would be rather like all Sundays, you see." And Nottobee agreed.

But they were very sad.

It was a few days after this that Miss Travis came upon them unawares. They were sitting huddled together on the broad window-seat in the schoolroom. "We must *kneel*," said Tobee. So they untwisted various arms and legs and knelt on the window-seat.

"We must do it together," said Tobee, "begin when I say three."

Nottobee nodded.

"One, two, *three*," said Tobee, "Dear Mr. God, please send a husban' for Miss Travis at once. Amen. P.S. A *nice* one, Mr. God, with lots of hair an' no grease. Amen."

Miss Travis retired softly.

Afterwards she came to the Twins. They were still sitting in the window-seat gazing out up at the sky. A gleam lit Miss Travis's eyes, and she wondered if they expected a husband to fall like a bolt from the blue.

But as the days passed no husband appeared.

"I s'pose God can't find one neither," said Tobee, and they gave up waiting and set about to find another themselves.

V.

It was autumn now, and the schoolroom looked cosy with the glow of the fire.

One afternoon, when it was getting dusk, Miss Travis sat in a low lounge chair with her eyes fixed dreamily on the fire. The Twins sat on the rug at her feet, jumbled up anyhow, and deep in thought.

Presently the governess looked from the fire to the red heads glowing brilliantly in its light.

"Is it my husband, Twins?" she said.

The red heads nodded, and the blue eyes looked gravely up into her face.

"Suppose," said Miss Travis softly, "I help you."

A little surprised pause.

"How would it be if I found a husband for myself?" Laughter struggled with something else in her voice.

"Really, honest Injin?" said the Twins together.

She nodded.

"It'll do for me," said Tobee, and he gave a deep chuckle, and so did Nottobee.

"When'll you begin to look for him?" asked Tobee.

"Are you so anxious to get rid of me?" said Miss Travis, and her voice was sad.

The Twins bumped their heads together uncomfortably.

"Yes," said Tobee, and "Yes," echoed Nottobee.

For the Twins were disconcertingly honest. There was a little silence. The Twins wrung their overalls in agitated pondering.

"You see," began Tobee at last, "we like you *out* of lessing time."

"Not much, or you wouldn't want me to go, my Twins."

"Yes, we should. We just hate gov'nesses."

"When'll you begin to look for your husband?" said Nottobee.

The door opened and a maid came in with lights and tea.

The Twins had great faith in Miss Travis. They were contentedly sure now that the husband would soon be forthcoming. So the next day they asked her if she had found him.

"Yes," said Miss Travis.

"Oh!"

"Is he *nice*?"

"Very nice," said Miss Travis.

"What is he like?"

"Well, he is tall and dark and has blue eyes, and two little boys."

"Oh!"

Pause; then "What'll you do with those boys?" asked Tobee.

"Love them," said Miss Travis.

"Humph!" said Tobee crossly, and Nottobee said it too.

Presently Tobee observed carelessly, "I s'pose they're just awful good, those boys?"

The governess's eyes gleamed.

"No; they're certainly not that."

The Twins' faces grew eager.

"I'd send them 'way to school in — in 'Stralia!" said Tobee insinuatingly.

"I don't think I will," said Miss Travis.

"They — they'll be just an *awful* bother to you," Tobee assured her earnestly.

"Just *awful*!" said Nottobee.

"I hope not," said Miss Travis smiling.

"I tell you what," cried Tobee eagerly, "I'd just get a gov'ness for them, a *big* gov'ness with hands that hurt you, and make them do lessings for hours and hours and *hours*——"

"All the days," added Nottobee.

"Up in the schoolroom, yon see, an' *you'd* be downstairs," further explained Tobee.

"Very well," said Miss Travis, "perhaps I will do that."

The Twins heaved a big sigh of relief.

"Wouldn't you like to know his—my husband's —name?" said Miss Travis softly.

The Twins looked up expectantly.

"Do we know him?" asked Tobee, "I don't think he's very nice."

"Nor do I," said Nottobee.

"Yes, you know him, and you love him very much."

"*I* don't!" cried the Twins simultaneously.

"You do; he—he is your father."

Miss Travis's tone was unusually nervous, and there was a queer sort of appeal in it.

The Twins' heads were bent back at an acute angle as they sat on the rug at her feet. Bewilderment was the only expression with which they received her news at first, but it changed slowly to a complexity of expressions that defy definition.

"Was *we* those boys?" demanded Tobee at last.

"Yes."

A look of anxiety crept into their faces.

"That big gov'ness," observed Tobee carelessly, "she—she was just a joke, wasn't she?"

"Just a joke," said Nottobee.

Miss Travis smiled.

"I don't know," she said.

"It—it's no good getting her 'cause we just send her 'way, you see. I just wouldn't bother, if I were you," said Tobee insinuatingly. His smile was unusual and decidedly taking.

"We'll see about it," said Miss Travis, patting his head.

"You won't go 'way now even when you've got a husband, will you?" asked Tobee.

"Will you?" said Nottobee.

Miss Travis shook her head.

"What'll you do to us?"

"Just love you, my Twins."

"You—you won't want to kiss us a *dreadful* lot, will you?"

"No."

They sighed and twisted their overalls, and thought.

Miss Travis was leaning forward in her chair, and her eyes rested with a queer expression on the Twins.

"P'raps," said Tobee with a forlorn hope, "you won't be a gov'ness when you're married to Dad?"

With impulsive warmth came Miss Travis's answer, "No, no!" she said, and suddenly she bent and gathered them close in her arms, "I'll just love you and love you," she said.

"Won't we never have any lessons?" asked Tobee in a muffled voice.

She gave a little soft laugh, "You must, my Twins, you must, but we'll manage somehow," and she kissed one red head and then the other.

The Twins wriggled out of her arms, and rubbed the tops of their heads.

"An' that big old gov'ness?" queried Tobee nonchalantly.

"Oh, we won't have her."

The Twins squatted themselves down on the rug again, and gazed up at her earnestly, the while they twisted their overalls. Then they wriggled themselves along the floor closer to her feet.

"I don't think," said Tobee with judicial gravity, "it'll be bad."

"Nor do I," said Nottobee.

EDITOR'S NOTES.

A slight Forecast of the New Volume.

THE EDITOR feels confidence in saying that the new Volume of THE GIRL'S REALM promises to excel those which have already appeared. The new Serial is a captivating story, called "LITTLE MOTHER MEG," by Ethel Turner. To the many thousands of girls who delight in the writing of Ethel Turner, we need only say that the family at Misrule—so interesting and so lovable—figures in this story. To the girls who have yet to make the authoress's acquaintance we can promise the most genuine pleasure. Many times the reviewers have hailed Miss Turner as the true successor of Louisa M. Alcott, whose "Little Women" is one of the most widely read of all girls' books.

"RHODA," too, is to re-appear in our pages, and the doings of the girl and her friends, in whom our readers became so much interested, will be found most entertaining and amusing.

"HOW I CAN EARN A LIVING" is the subject of a new department which will be started in the October number of THE GIRL'S REALM, under the direction of Miss Frances H. Low, whose articles on women's employment in *The Daily Chronicle* excited so much notice a short time since. In this department Miss Low will give advice to girls on this important subject, and answer the questions they so often put to the Editor. I feel sure it will add greatly to the helpfulness of the magazine.

Those girls who are interested in Plays for school and home entertainments will be pleased to know that several plays by well-known writers will appear before Christmas.

Next month a detailed announcement of the main features of the new Volume will be made.

Some of our readers do not know that the Magazine is published on the 15th of the month, and that to be sure of getting a copy a definite order has to be given to the bookseller. We are always hearing of girls who are confronted with the remark "sold out," which may be obviated in the way suggested.

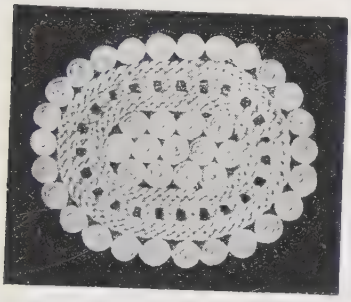
Table Mats made of Cord

A NOVEL AND VERY INEXPENSIVE WORK FOR GIRLS.

By ANN WILLIAMS.

Illustrated by Special Designs.

THE holidays of most are now over, and the long afternoons spent on the beach, needlework in hand, nothing but a pleasant memory. October once begun, however, the days shorten, and fires are begun. And then girls welcome eagerly new ideas for needlework.



A MAT FOR AN OVAL DISH.

A novel idea for inexpensive table mats is to weave them by hand of the circular cord used for corset lacing. These mats are strong, they launder well, and are an excellent protection for a polished table, on which they are very effective. The accompanying illustrations show two designs. The first is called the "Daisy" pattern, and the second the "S."

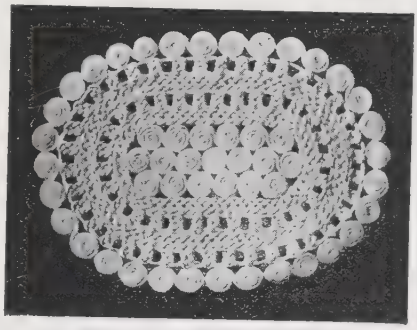
Cut the brass end of a firm corset lace, and, by twisting cotton around the lace, bind to prevent ravelling. Make a coil three strands deep, and over-hand on the wrong side. Form seven loops, each one being twisted once round the coil, and sew them to it. Cut off the cord and bind the end neatly under. Make a plait of four strands of the cord, long enough to go round this daisy form, and attach it to the outer loops of the daisy. Seven more daisies sewed round the plait complete the doily. Other mats of the same pattern may be made in the same way on a larger scale.

THE DAISY PATTERN MAT.

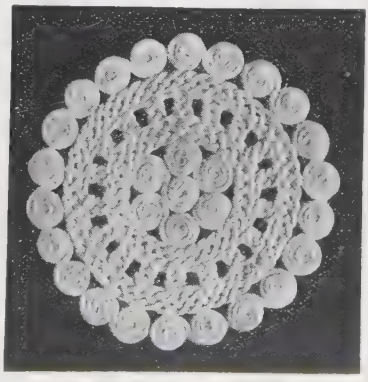
For the "S" mats make a coil four strands deep, and by reversing the direction of the coil make a second as close as possible to the first. This makes the "S," from which any number of designs may be invented.

The seven little circles in the centre of the small "S" doily are made of three "S'es,' and one circle. The second size is made of six "S'es" and a circle. Any number of "S'es" that will make a pretty symmetrical arrangement can be used with very good effect.

The four-strand plaiting in the "S" mats is made a little more complicated by the joining of the two rows of plaits. Take the outer strand of the inner circle and the two inner strands of the outer circle, and plait them in a three-strand plait between the two circles. This forms the small squares that appear between the plaits. If the mats are to be used over white linen they will look better in their natural colour, but if they are to be placed on a polished table they will be richer in effect if dipped in strong coffee.



A MAT FOR A MEAT DISH.



A SMALL "S" DOILY.

SUNSHINE TOYS and HOW to MAKE THEM

·NUGENT· ·SMEDLEY·

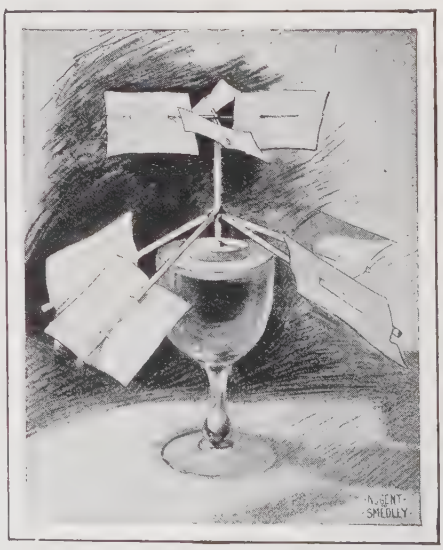
By MEREDITH NUGENT.

Illustrated by the Author and VICTOR J. SMEDLEY.

WHO would have thought that the golden sunshine flooding our rooms had sufficient power in it to drive a pin-wheel round? Who would have imagined that the dainty yachts shown in the illustration sailed round and round their circling orbits without any other aid than that derived from the warm breath of the star that keeps our earth so green?

Only very simple materials are necessary for the making of these toys —some cardboard, tissue-paper and string. The completed toy must be set so that the sun's rays strike full upon it.

For the floating pin-wheel fasten a piece of straw three inches in length in an upright position to the centre of a large flat cork. Then take another piece of straw six inches long, split it lengthwise with a penknife, and fasten both halves to the top of the perpendicular straw with sealing-wax. Cut out four pieces of tissue-paper two by two and one half inches, and attach these to split straws with gum or glue. Then take four more straws, each seven inches in length, and fasten these to the upright one about one inch above the surface of the cork, taking care to slant them downward as shown in the illustration. Cut out four pieces of light writing-paper three by three and one fourth inches, punch two holes in each, and place them on straws as illustrated. Slide the pieces of writing-paper back and forth on the straws until the pin-wheel is perfectly balanced.



THE FLOATING PIN-WHEEL.

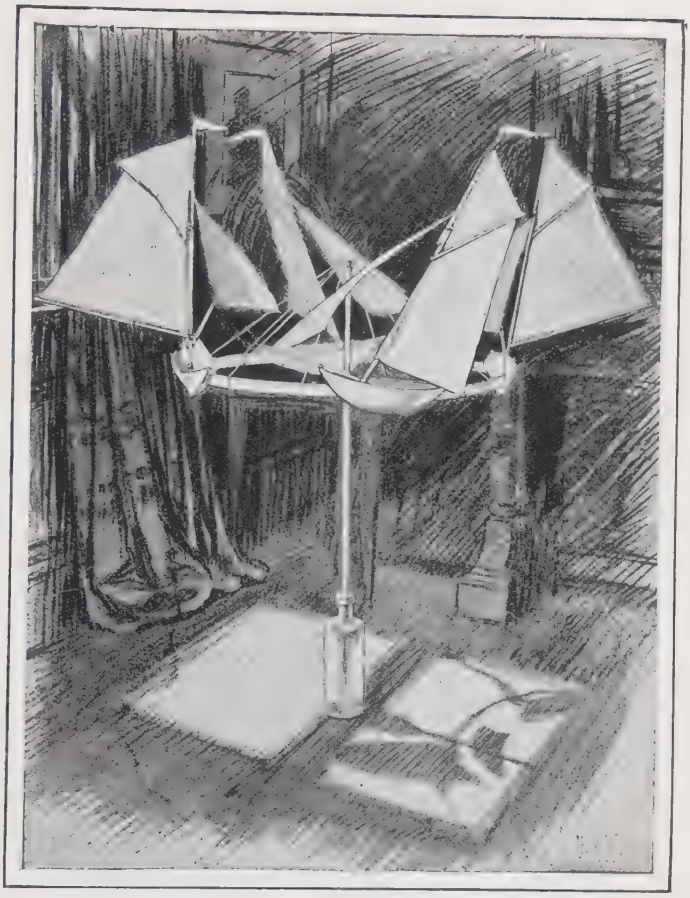
When set in the sunlight this double-decked pin-wheel will revolve beautifully. See to it that the goblet is brimming full of water before floating the pin-wheel.

For the fan-wheel the axle is a perfectly straight stick, three feet long, three-eighths of an inch in diameter in the centre, and tapering slightly at the ends. The spokes are eight delicate sticks, each one foot in length, and drawn into the shape of a bow with pieces of thread. Fasten the spokes to the axle with sealing-wax at a distance of seven inches from each end of it. Then tie a thread to one end of the axle, running and fastening it to the tips of both sets of spokes, and secure it firmly to the other end of the axle. Also run a thread from the middle of each spoke to its mate opposite, which will prevent the paper paddles from sagging when placed in position. All threads should be drawn taut. The paddles of the wheel are made

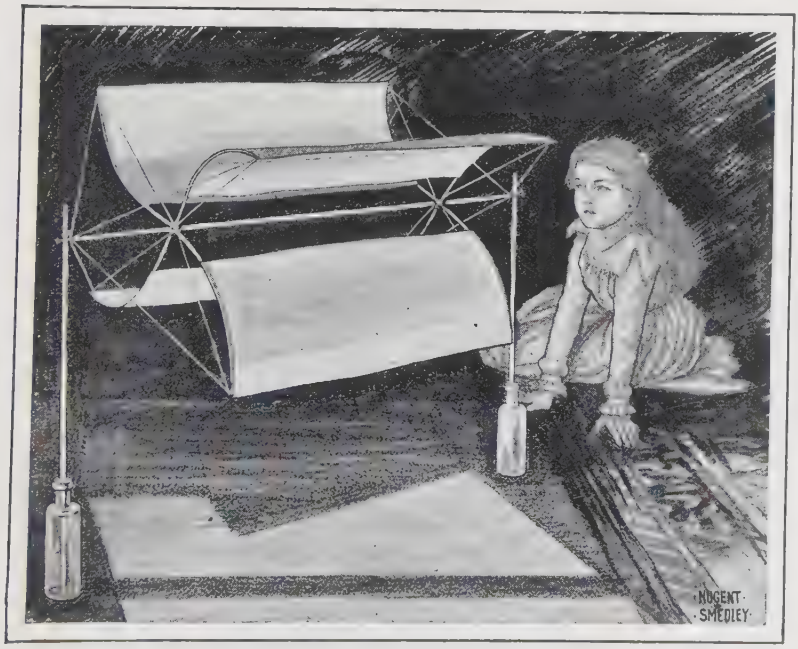
of tissue-paper, twenty-three inches by ten inches. Paste the long ends of the paper over the spokes, and the front outer edge over the thread. Drive a pin in both tips of the axle. Make two upright sticks, fasten them tightly into bottles and stick pins in the upper ends of them at almost right angles, for the axle of the toy fan-wheel to rotate upon.

Sunlight Yachts. — Make a cardboard ring three-fourths of an inch wide and five feet in circumference, and fasten eight pieces of thread, about fifteen inches in length, to it at equal distances apart. Fasten the other ends of the threads to a small cardboard disk one and one-half inches in diameter. To the cardboard ring attach masts of straw, fourteen inches high, with sealing wax. The sails are of tissue-paper pasted to the masts. Make the hull of each yacht of two pieces of tissue-paper nine by three inches, and paste curved edges of these to each side of the cardboard ring. Fasten a straight stick in a bottle as shown in the illustration, and to the top of this a pin, head downward, with sealing-wax. Place the cardboard disk on the point of the pin, and the yachts will appear as shown in the illustration. The greatest care must be taken to have the whole perfectly balanced.

When placed in the sunlight the boats sail.



A SUNLIGHT YACHT.



A TOY FAN-WHEEL.

A Girl's Alpine Climb.

Illustrated by Snapshots taken by her Father during Miss Vera Butler's Ascent.

By ISABEL MARKS.

THE ascent of Mont Blanc by Miss Vera Butler when only fifteen years of age is a feat of which any girl might well be proud. This girl, however, treats her mountaineering in the same modest manner as she does her ballooning experiences and her adventurous motor-car trips, many of which were undertaken when automobilism was not so generally practised as at present. It was during one of these motor excursions that Miss Butler accomplished the difficult task of driving over the Simplon Pass, a feat that demanded of the executant not a little skill and a great deal of nerve.

The peculiar physical conditions prevailing upon snow-covered ice-bound mountains make many demands upon the courage and endurance of those exploring their fastnesses. Mont Blanc, no exception to the rule, presents many difficulties to the climber. Treacherous, indeed, are the glaciers, which, from afar, present a smooth, apparently unbroken opaque surface quite distinct in shade from the softer white of the surrounding snow-lands which they intersect. These prove on nearer acquaintance to be rent in a thousand places by deep fissures, called crevasses, chasms of unknown depths that are frequently concealed beneath a thin mantle of overlying snow, unable to bear the slightest weight. Its zig-zag paths winding round the base of precipitous and all but inaccessible heights are truly formidable. The footing on them is frequently so steep and so precarious that in particularly difficult places a halt is called that the guide may with his ice-axe cut steps in the frozen surface and holds for the hands. The more level parts have their own distinctive and special dangers, such as avalanches, and a disagreeable liability to be swept by showers of rock and ice. These heavy showers are due to the influence of the sun's warm rays upon the sensitive medium in which they lie embedded, and are often direful in their results.

Add to these dangers the increased fatigue of muscular exertion in the rarefied air of the upper slopes, the difficulty of breathing experienced in high altitudes, and other discomforts following in their wake, and it will be seen that the lot of the adventurer on the mountain is not always a happy one. Yet such is the beauty of the scenery, the exhilarating effect of the bracing air amongst the snow-clad peaks, and the glorious excitement of the undertaking that a first experience usually leads to others.

Miss Butler, prior to her first ascent, did not undergo any preliminary training. For some time previously she had been travelling abroad with her father, a well-known motorist and aeronaut, fond of all sports. In the course of their journeyings the two found themselves at Chamonix, which lies beneath the shadow of the huge white dome of Mont Blanc. The sight of its distant beauties awoke in father and daughter a desire for more intimate acquaintance. One day, to the surprise of guides and inhabitants, Mr. Butler announced his intention of taking his daughter to the summit towering high above them. I can imagine how these good folks protested. "Mademoiselle climbs well and is very fearless; ah, yes, one sees that, but the ascent—it is not easy, and not many ladies go up, *mais enfin, si Monsieur le veut*, our services are at his disposal."

Thus, one fine September morning, accompanied by the trusty guide, Jean Bruton, his brother Paul, and porters to carry food and baggage, Mr. and Miss Butler started off at eight o'clock with the intention of making their first stay at the Pierre Pointul, some little way up the mountain, where they would take breakfast and exchange the saddle for Shank's mare. Seated upon an amiable mule the girl mountaineer proceeded along the curving road which led to the glories of the snow world, past roaring torrents, children of the silent glaciers above, through the belt of trees, the toy houses of

the toy village beneath dwindling and diminishing at every upward curve, until even the slender shelter of the sturdy firs ceased to shade the party from the heat of the sun.

Emerging from the road on to the bare hill-side the party found it strewn with the *débris* of avalanches, for snow-slopes, when exposed to the disturbing influences of warmth or moisture, have an inconsiderate way, which they share in common with falling ice and rock showers, of precipitating themselves without warning from their resting places into the place below. One part of Mont Blanc is traversed some hours before sunrise to lessen the risk of one of these avalanches that are so deadly upon it.

Miss Vera Butler's Father and his guide pause to admire the view.

Chamonix, the starting point.

Arrived at the modest level of 6,723 ft. there was a general halt, that the travellers might satisfy keen appetites born of the mountain air, and feast their eyes upon the wide expanse of beautiful views lying beneath and around them. After rest came work, and plenty of it too, for not until nightfall did the party reach the cabin at the Grands Mulets, where they were to dine and sleep.

Roped and ready for the Ascent.

Up betimes the next morning, they crossed the Glacier des Bossons, to find there the wonders of the ice-world revealed. Soon they reach the rock-scarred l'Aiguille du Midi, which in its melting stage showers

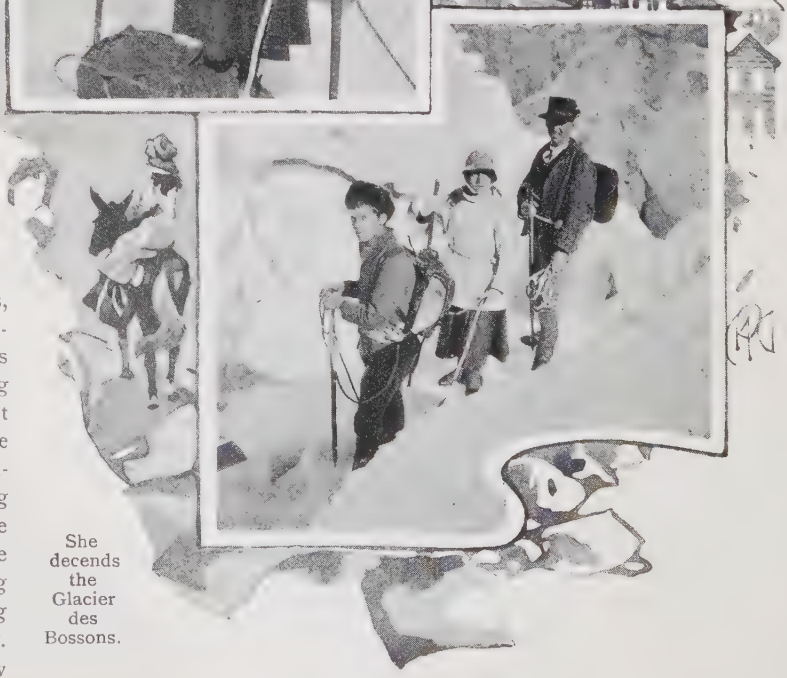
The girl mountaineer looks up at Mont Blanc from the Grands Mulets, 11,000 feet high.

She pauses by the Grands Mulets.

down ice and masses of stones and earth, that in their half-mile course from ledge to ledge acquire great velocity, and are the cause of grave anxiety.

Mr. and Miss Butler luckily escaped these encounters, but the treacherous surface of the glaciers, its numberless intersecting crevasses, and the slant at which it lies upon the steep side of the mountain, rendered the roping together of the whole party necessary. The utility of this proceeding was fully proved during one thrilling moment. Miss Butler, up till now so sure-footed, slipped when near the edge of a blind crevasse, and fell forward into the abyss. Down rolled her alpenstock into the bottomless gulf over which she was hanging suspended. But it was for a few seconds only; quick as thought a haul on the rope to which she was attached brought her back to safety.

The mountaineer cannot for a moment relax watchfulness. The snow-bridges spanning the crevasses weaken as the day advances, and the leading guide must walk warily. Single file is the order of the day,



She decends the Glacier des Bossons.

lentement et doucement his persistent cry. More especially difficult is the going at the meeting of the Glacier des Bossons with that of Taccony, where the ice is all a-tilt. Level surface there is none, and the procession along the ridges demands a steady eye and steady nerves; as does the passage along the plank which takes the place of a missing bridge. A trying addition to the labours of the day is the intense heat of the sun experienced in high altitudes, which seems to drain the body of all moisture, and gives rise to an insatiable craving for cooling drinks.

As the sun drew to its setting Mr. and Miss Butler reached the shelter of the Grands Mulets (10,113 ft.), where dinner and a few hours' rest followed. The simple hut built on the summit is managed by a kindly woman who is frequently the only human being amid all that waste of ice and snow.

The travellers' rest within the lonely cabin was not of long duration. At 3 o'clock father and daughter were roused from their slumbers and given coffee to drink made from snow-water collected in pans as it dropped from the roof in the heat of the day—for mains and water-rates are alike unknown at the Grands Mulets. As precautions against the biting cold, each member of the party donned thick woollen gaiters, gloves without fingers and felt hats; they also put paper in their boots and bound handkerchiefs round their heads. They set forth cheerfully, looking forward eagerly to the final glories of the summit. But alas! for the futility of human hopes! While for the snow around them they cared not a jot, the thick white masses that presently commenced to beat upon them from the invisible clouds, bade them pause. They dared not neglect its warning, for most Alpine accidents have happened through ascents made when the storm fiend is abroad. Much disappointed they retraced their steps. The weather grew from bad to worse, a terrific thunder-storm broke over the mountains, thick clouds covered the peaks and hid the snowfields. Reluctantly father and daughter abandoned all hope of final success for the present and returned safely, if regretfully, to Chamonix.

"THE GIRL'S REALM" NEEDLEWORK DESIGNS.

VI.—AN EMBROIDERED BLOTTER.

As the outcome of the suggestion of one of our readers, a design for an embroidered blotter forms the subject of the sketch presented on this page.

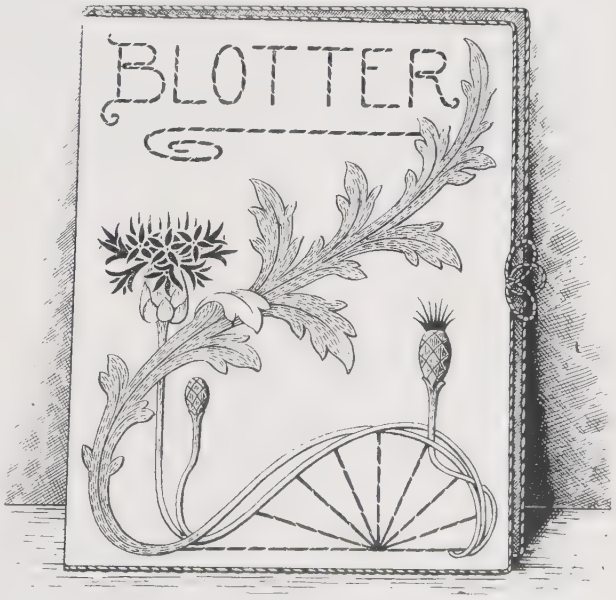
There are several ways in which this blotter might be worked. To begin with, the background might be made of linen, either of a very fine texture, or of a coarse one. The material having been selected and the design traced thereon, the next step is to decide on the colour and materials with which to work it. These are a matter of choice. Linen thread or silks look equally well, though it should be remembered that in embroidery, the richer material should always be employed on the poorer.

Having decided all these points, work the flower-head with its little star-like forms in solid, and also the shoots on top of the bud; then closely and very evenly darn the leaf that curls behind, following the curves and lines; these should be in a lighter tone than the flowers, and outlined in a bolder one.

The calix of the flowers should be worked in satin-stitch emphasising the diamond-shaped divisions, care being taken that the shade chosen does not bring them into undue prominence.

The wording and the lines that radiate between the stems having been stitched down with cord, either gold or silk, the effect will be complete. When made up on good strong boards this blotter would form a most acceptable present, or a very salable article for a bazaar.

There are many kinds of materials that afford great scope as backgrounds for work of this kind, such as the satin-de-luxe, serge, satin and wool, and numerous others that are obtainable now in the loveliest shades. The size of this blotter is 10 by 12. Mr. Ainsworth, who designs these patterns, will always tell any of our readers the cost of tracing on any material. His address is 4, Camden House Terrace, Kensington, W.



New Ideas for Girls' Swimming Races

THE STEEPLECHASE RACE: CLAMBERING OVER THE SPAR.

By A. ALEXANDER.

Principal of the Southport Physical Training College.

Illustrated by PHIL EBBUTT.

GIRLS fond of swimming will eagerly welcome these suggestions of novel swimming races. By these means one or two enterprising girls could provide for their friends an amusing and very original form of entertainment. The bath authorities of any large town will readily grant the private use of one of their baths upon a small payment being made. In deciding the races the services of a couple of judges should be requisitioned, one of whom should stand at each side of the bath. In this way they will be able to see better.

Short Race.

The proceedings should generally open with a short race, that is, one length of the bath, for while it enables beginners to join in the contest, it does not prevent the advanced swimmers from showing off their skill and speed. The swimmers should start from the deep end, the judges being at the shallow end. If the entries are numerous, they should be divided into heats of three swimmers each, the winner of each heat swimming off in a final race.

Swimming on Back Race.

This is a race which should be encouraged, for while it is one of the easiest acquired methods of swimming, it is also the safest in view of possible danger, for a person can without effort remain for a considerable time on the back until assistance arrives. In starting the swimming race on the back the competitors should seize hold of the bar above the water and draw up the feet close to the hands. When the start is given the hands should be loosened and a vigorous push off given by the feet, the body straightening with the arms to the side. Some swimmers can, by a judicious use of the arms, paddling with the hands outwards from and inwards to the sides, make very good progress in the water, especially if an occasional leg stroke be given. Another favourite style of swimming on the back is, after pushing off with the feet, to quickly extend the arms above the head, and as the leg stroke is given bring them outwards and downwards to the sides. If the swimmer is flexible at the shoulders, this is a quick method of getting along, but if not, the method described first is best. In swimming a backward race, the head should be turned occasionally, that the swimmer may take in her bearings.

Flying Squadron Race.

This is an exciting race, and very suitable for a swimming entertainment. It consists of an equal number of swimmers challenging each other to swim over a certain distance in the shortest time. The two squads may be composed of either three or six swimmers each. For the purpose of explanation we will select three swimmers to represent each squad. All the swimmers will be obliged to swim a couple of lengths of the baths, and only one from each squad will be allowed to swim at one time. Thus, supposing two squads of three are opposing each other, they will take their respective positions behind each other at the deep end of the baths, numbering themselves one, two and three respectively. When the start is given number one

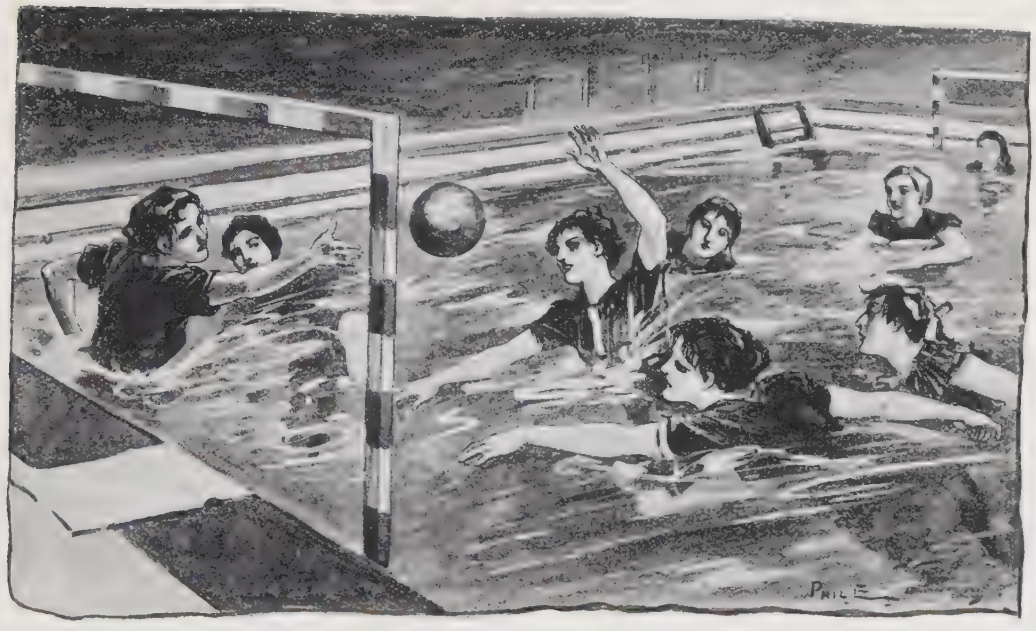
from each side will plunge into the water, swim to the other end, turn and swim back again. As soon as one of them has touched the iron bar, number two of that squad will dive into the water to swim the course. As soon as number one of the other squad touches the iron bar, number two of her side will also plunge in quickly to swim the course. As soon as number two of either side returns, number three of her squad will dive in and swim the course, number three of the other squad following suit when number two of her side also arrives. Whichever squad finishes first wins the race.

The Steeplechase.

The steeplechase makes a pleasant change in the ordinary programme of swimming races. The obstacle to be surmounted is usually a light spar which, as a rule, can be hired from some builder's yard and in many instances is kept permanently at the baths. This spar should be about the width of the bath and must be secured at each end by a line to the rail which is usually attached to the side walls of baths. The object of the race is to start from the deep end of the bath, dive into the water, and swimming to the spar, clamber over it (see the head-piece to this article), and then continue swimming to the shallow end of the bath. The success of the race will largely depend upon the activity shown by the swimmers in surmounting the obstacle. This is done in many ways, but perhaps the best method is to endeavour to press above the pole until the waist rests against it; then to get the feet on and push off in a horizontal plunge. When the swimmers become expert in this kind of competition an additional spar is generally used.

Water Hockey.

Water hockey is usually a capital conclusion to a swimming entertainment. It is a game generally confined to the sterner sex, when it is of a rough-and-tumble description; but, under modified conditions, a good amount of fun and excitement can be extracted from it. Goal-posts should be erected at each end of the bath. The posts should be about six feet wide and the top bar about four feet high above the water, that at the shallow end being raised an additional foot in order to compensate somewhat for the easier position. The game should be competed in by two sides of an equal number of swimmers whose uniform should be distinguished in some way, either by a sash or rosette. The players should be divided into goal-keepers, half-backs and forwards; the object of one side being, of course, to pass the ball under the bar of their opponents. The rules of hockey should be followed as much as possible, the respective captains agreeing to the main points. The ball should be a round football (Association), and when propelled or thrown one hand only should be used. After each five minutes of play, ends should be changed in order to give each side an equal chance of the advantages of position.



AN EXCITING MOMENT AT WATER HOCKEY: THE GOAL IN DANGER.

MY CHAT WITH THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

My dear Girls,—

I know you have taken your share in England's grief at the illness of her King. London was a strange and even a heartrending sight on that brilliant June day, the very eve of the Coronation. It was a regal day, the sun shone out of a cloudless heaven. The wet and the cold of the previous days had vanished and all was blue. Flags were flying from roofs and balconies, from steeples and poles. The streets were garlanded with flowers and arched with evergreens. There was red bunting on all the houses, and the seats erected showed the way the procession would take. Everywhere were the illuminations waiting to be lit and turn the streets to rivers of fire. The news had come in at noon—the King was ill; there had been an operation: the coronation was postponed.

It came with a shock. The tragedy was so poignant that all sense of personal disappointment was forgotten. On Coronation Day it seemed as if the decorations would be removed, in order to put up tokens of national mourning. But day by day our fears lessened as the bulletins concerning the King's health grew more and more confident in tone. At last they assured us that he was out of danger. The fear that had hung like a nightmare over us was lifted. Then came the news that Lord Kitchener and Lord Roberts had seen the King. This was followed by the happy tidings that he had been removed to his yacht anchored at Cowes, and now assurance has come that if all goes well, the Coronation will be on August 9th. By the time you read this chat the great postponed pageant will have taken place.

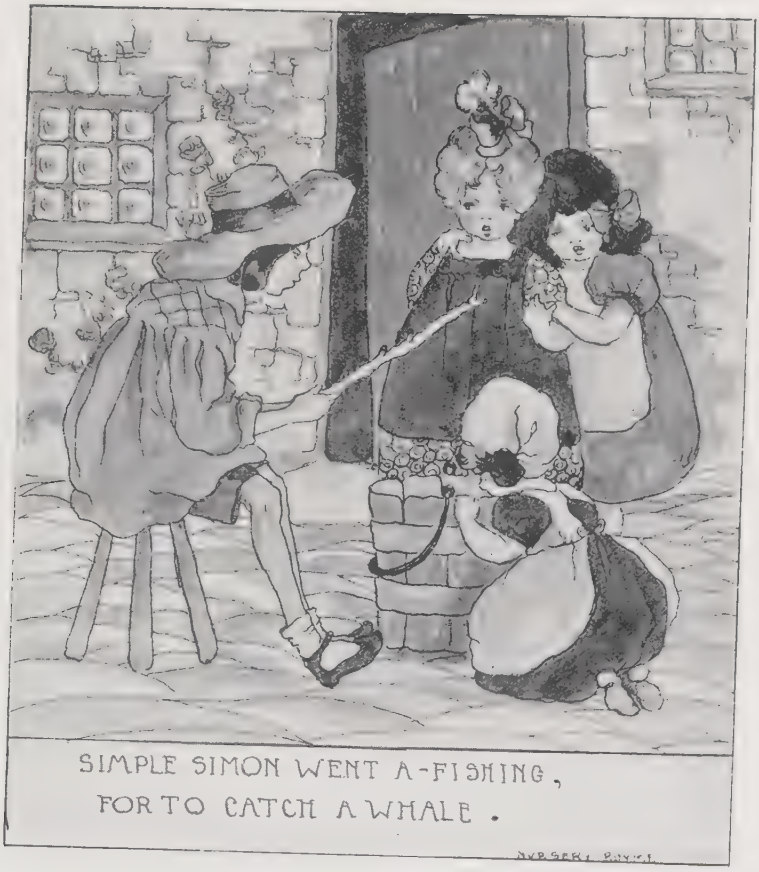
We can take our holiday with happier spirits, and we are now in the holiday time and most of us have made our plans and are already carrying them out. These plans will be agreeable if they have been made as nearly according to taste as possible, but we want to be sure that they are according to it. So many of us don't arrange our holidays according to our liking, but go here and there, as though there must be pleasure in mere continual change of place. I think holidays should be as varied in their scope as is human nature itself. A good deal of mockery has been wasted upon holidays with a purpose, but there are many worse things than holidays made to suit people's practice and hobbies. One good example, for instance, is the cycling holiday. For those who are ardent cyclists what can be more delightful than to set out with a band of good friends and pleasant associates for a tour in search of the picturesque, or, choosing a more special department of it, say to old churches and cathedrals, or to visit historical sites. I assume, of course, that it is a collective tour, and that you are likely to be surrounded, if not exactly by troops of friends, at least by a chosen few.

I know one set of holiday makers—they were all girl art-students—who, one summer, had an exceedingly good time in a gipsy van. They carried all their traps with them as they went from place to place, an old coachman guiding the caravan. One of the art-students was a wit and she carried on a merry chatter with the village folk wherever they halted, and did a lively bit of business painting their portraits at sixpence a head.

The sketching holiday is, I think, the most enjoyable of all, but of course it requires certain aptitudes. It is a variety of the holiday in search of the picturesque.

Lying on my table is a letter from M. A. E. It comes, so I should judge, from a little dot of a girl, but it is a passionate outpouring of the yearning for affection, the craving to have and to give in affection, what might be enough to swell the heart of a nightingale to bursting. Oh! what a cry it is, and it is all for the affection of a schoolmistress—nothing more romantic than that. But why should it be? Listen! I am forbidden to quote in full, but there can be no violation of confidence in a few extracts, especially as I am asked to answer a question. "There is a mistress at school whom I passionately love. In the Christmas holidays I wrote to her and told her so. Since then I have been always endeavouring to do something for her.....I try to go round by her lodgings that she may see me and walk with me and speak to me. What do you think she thinks about it and do you think it is forward or pushing?"

It is naturally rather difficult for me to say what she thinks about it. But if she is, as somehow I seem to feel sure she is, the right sort of woman, she is touched by the attention of her little friend, and she feels a better woman for it. Remember it is as great a pleasure for one of us grown ones to be spoilt by a baby, as it is for the baby to be spoilt by one of us. I think also that it is a good deal more profitable. You may really do the baby harm by it, but you can never do us anything but good by bringing us back to the beauty and purity and devotion of our earliest ideals, when the whole world was a sort of Eden and the only true business in it was loving and being loved. I daresay she feels that since M. A. E., with her intensely affectionate nature, must love somebody, she should at least have in the choice she has made a guide, philosopher and friend to care for till she is really grown up, and she is intensely grateful for the choice that M. A. E. has made. Of course she will think that the child is pushing, but only pushing in the best sense, in the sense in which all of us must push, when we have something to offer, which we want very much the other to accept. I should like to see a little more of this quality among girls, I should like to see them a little more ready to let one another know frankly and out and out that they want to mate in friendship, and that they have found a mate of their choice. They need never be afraid of giving themselves away, for all that is best in themselves can always be found again at need.



Drawn by AGNES RICHARDSON *and awarded a Diploma in "Our Readers' Own Realm" Competition.*

MELODY.

SAN SEBASTIAN,
Where the greater part of King Alfonso's boyhood was spent.

THE BOY KING

THE LIFE OF ALPHONSO XIII TOLD IN ANECDOTE

By RACHEL CHALLICE.

We are indebted to the kindness of Lieut.-Colonel Luis de Figuerola-Ferretti, Chamberlain to the King of Spain, for the authentic nature of this article.

LIEUT.-COL. LUIS DE FIGUEROLA-FERRETTI,
Chamberlain to H.M. the King of Spain.

In these days of unauthentic publication of characteristics and deeds of important personages, it is not amiss to give the sources of my information on the young King of Spain. Before I went to Madrid in May last, the name of Alfonso XIII. suggested merely that of a foreign king about to attain his majority, and, like most English people, I was ignorant of the personality of the royal Spanish youth. When I reached Spain I found that this ignorance was not peculiar to foreigners, for the Spanish people knew little or nothing of their sovereign, the seclusion sagely imposed by his royal mother for the study and exercise so necessary for his mental and physical development having precluded his appearance in public or society.

Thanks to the courtesy of the Spanish Secretary of State I had the privilege of being present at the municipal functions of the Coronation.

Moreover, I am indebted to Lt.-Colonel Luis de Figuerola-Ferretti (Chamberlain to the King of Spain), whose portrait is given, for the authentic characteristic touches of this sketch of the Spanish sovereign; and it is also due to the kindness of the same courtier in sending me information up-to-date that some idea of the first months of the royal youth's rule reaches The Girl's Realm. This information is of especial interest, for Colonel Figuerola-Ferretti is a man of position at the Court of Madrid. Since the wound to his arm, incurred in the Cuban War, disabled him from the use of the sword, he has wielded his pen in the cause of the State, his appeal for improved education in his work called *Verdades Contemporaneas* (Contemporaneous Truths) being truly eloquent. In his charming history in verse of the Regency of Queen Maria Christina, published on the majority of her son, he gives a faithful and pleasing picture of Spain, which has been so deeply influenced by the personality of the good Queen.

I must begin my story of the Boy King's life by introducing you to the Royal Palace at Madrid on the 17th May, 1886, the day on which Spain hailed the birth of their baby Sovereign. "Viva el Rey!" exclaimed with

KING ALFONSO AT THE EARLY AGE OF SIX MONTHS.

emotion the ministers and grandees of the realm when Senor Sagasta, the President of the Council, proclaimed the news to the assembly. Shortly after this announcement the Duchess of Medina de las Torres appeared in the ante-chamber bearing in her arms a basket that contained the royal infant. Wrapped in cotton-wool the infant King received the homage of his ministers.

Five days later Madrid was *en fête* for the baptism of the royal child. Wearing a robe of the richest English lace and the broad velvet sash embroidered with fleurs-de-lis that his father had worn at his baptism, the royal infant was borne on a silver salver draped with costly coverings through the lines of officers, statesmen, and court ladies into the chapel of the Palace, where, at a solemn service, he received the names of Alfonso Léon Fernando Maria Santiago Isidro Pascual Antony.

Aided by the Duchess of Medina de las Torres, the Señora Tacon and an excellent nurse, Queen Christina devoted herself entirely to the care of her child. His rooms were in close proximity to her own private apartments, and *Puby* (a German pet-name) as she called him learned from an infant to look for the loving good-night visit of his mother, who, seating herself at the head of the blue-silk curtained cot, would hush her boy to sleep. Her soothing caresses grew, as time passed on, to be tender counsel to the child.

Only once has Spain suffered anxiety on account of her young sovereign's illness, and that only when an acute attack of indigestion laid him prostrate at the age of four. Then, humanly speaking, his life was saved by the unremitting care of his mother.

Unwilling to sacrifice his physical well-being to his mental progress, the Queen waited till her son was seven years old before planning for him a course of serious study. With an hour's steady instruction daily, the young monarch soon learnt to read and write with ease. It is interesting to know that he was never allowed to use a word without being thoroughly acquainted with its meaning. By this means he acquired an intelligent interest in things about him.

LATER, AT THE AGE OF TWO, HE FINDS LIFE A SERIOUS UNDERTAKING.

It was at the seaside resort of San Sebastian, in the beautiful palace of Miramar, that the royal child's second course of instruction commenced. Don Regino Zaragoza was his tutor for geography and history; about this time also he began rapidly to gain ground in French and Latin. But the quick intelligence of the lad did not impair the mischievousness natural to his age. I was told by the King's chamberlain that once, when he was about eight years old, streams of water were seen running down the corridor from the bath-room of the Royal Palace. The door of the apartment was found to be locked; and it was only when the Queen herself insisted on its being opened that the young delinquent was discovered enjoying what he called "a naval battle in high seas," the ships being logs abstracted from the wood baskets, and the high seas the over-flowing bath.

The same courtier told me that once when staying at the Casa de Campo (the country place near Madrid), the boy escaped from his governors to climb up on to the roof of a building which he had remarked as the resort of some roosters.

The King of Spain at the age of six.

Aged five.

Aged three.

Aged nine.

It must be remembered that the young King's courses of instruction were always those of the universities and institutes of the kingdom. He usually wore the uniform of a cadet of the Military Academy, except when, on a visit to a man-of-war, he adopted the naval dress. That his tutors found him a docile pupil can be gathered from the following anecdote: When one day a professor stood waiting for his royal pupil to be seated, he laughingly shook his head, saying, "No, you are the master, and I am the pupil: it is for you to be seated first."

Queen Christina overcame her son's difficulty with German by composing a small grammar for him which enabled him to master the rules of the language in a simple and amusing form. His inquiring turn of mind, and his desire to thoroughly understand many subjects was early made apparent by his leaning towards natural science, chemistry, etc.

The King's love for all that is military dates from his earliest childhood, when his great delight was to watch the change of the Royal Palace Guard from his nursery window. His boy regiment is now almost historical; many of its members still talk of their delight at its promotion to the dignity of a Mauser gun of almost professional

calibre. Their young captain's power of resource and command was evidenced in the way he carried the day in a wager made with his child soldiers that they should not on the morrow meet the admiring eyes of their parents at that part of the Royal Palace where the Foreign Office then had its bureaux. The following day the young battalion approached the palace. The little subalterns about to glance at the windows thought they had won the bet, when lo, in clear, sharp young tones there rang out the command, "Vista à la derecha!" (look to the right). Not an eye was turned towards the palace windows, and the royal boy commander scored.

Early rising has, of course, been always an essential part of the young King's programme, or he would not have time for such pursuits as photography (developing his own plates, and in this he excels), swimming, bicycling, music, painting, etc., as well as his graver studies.

During his minority Alfonso XIII. rose at 7 o'clock, and after a cold bath and some exercise in the gymnasium near his bedroom, he had a light breakfast with his mother and sisters. From 9 to 10 o'clock came a lesson in French from D. Luis Alberto Gayan, or in English from Don Alfonso Merry de Val. At 10 o'clock he went for a ride on horseback until 12 o'clock, when he lunched with the Queen and the Infanta. Then after a lesson in German or music from Señorita Paula Czerny, or in painting from Don José Pulgar, the King again walked or rode, generally in the company of his mother. At 2 o'clock he had military instruction, and between 3 and 4 o'clock a lesson in universal history or in fencing with other boys, under Don Pedro Carbonell. From 5.30 to 6.30 came a lesson in political law and administration, and once a week a lesson in general Spanish literature and classics. Dinner was at 7.30, and the remainder of the evening would be passed pleasantly in conversation or in playing pianoforte duets with his sister Maria Theresa until it was time to retire for rest. This programme was punctually adhered to under the direction of Don Aguirre de Lejada, the director of His Majesty's studies, and excepting when the King went to church on a Saturday afternoon at 5 o'clock with his mother and sister, it was rarely relaxed.

The King's sister, Maria Theresa, has always been his favourite companion, and the monarch's youthfulness is still apparent in the ringing laughter that resounded only a few weeks ago when brother and sister played ball in the corridors of the Palace of Miramar at San Sebastian.

It was the royal youth's natural simplicity, combined with his splendid education, that saved him from embarrassing self-consciousness on the great occasion when, on the 17th May last, he took the Constitutional Oath (the Jura) which gave him the full rights of a king, in the Houses of Parliament (Palacio del Congreso), before the brilliant assembly of princes, ambassadors, and ministers assembled for the occasion. The words were simple but impressive. "I swear before God upon the holy Gospels to maintain the Constitution and the Laws. If I do so, God will reward me, and if not, He will require it of me."

All present were touched at the young monarch's evident disinclination to take precedence of his mother when leaving the Palácio del Congreso. But the law of etiquette had to be observed—the regency was over, the reign had commenced. The Queen's power had ceased, the King's sway had commenced, and as the first person in the realm he had to precede even his mother.

But that very day the King issued a decree to the nation (made, as I was told by Colonel Luis de Figuerola-Ferretti at his own express desire), by which the royal mother retained all the privileges of the position she had held as Regent, which permits no one but the possible future wife of the King to take precedence of her. This, the first royal proclamation, shows the devotion of the son to the mother, for as Queen Christina is out of the line of possible inheritance to the crown, she would otherwise have taken lower rank than her sisters-in-law or her daughters.

Readers of THE GIRL'S REALM will be interested to hear that Spanish girls were the first of the Realm's commonalty to render an act of homage to their King. As the magnificent *cortège* of thirty-eight court coaches, each

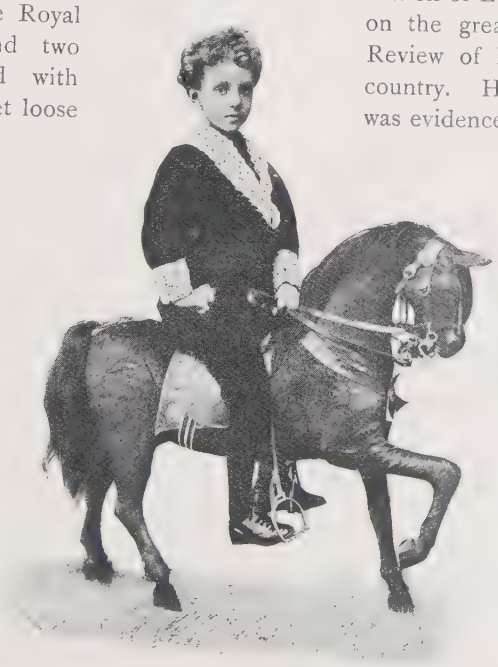
drawn by eight or ten horses, accompanied by grooms in gorgeous liveries, and regiments of soldiers, passed, after leaving the Congreso, along the streets of Madrid, transformed into bowers of flowers, the royal coach stopped at the Puerta de Moros (Gate of the Moors), where a deputation of maidens dressed in white presented the young King with a magnificent bouquet, saying, "Señor, in the name of the young girls of this quarter we venture to offer Your Majesty this token of respect." The young King seemed delighted at this sign of affection from his girl-subjects. As he alighted from the coach to receive the deputation, the bells of the church of our Lady of Grace rang merrily, the Royal March was played, and two hundred doves, decked with coloured ribbons, were let loose near the royal *cortège*. With evident pleasure the Boy-King took into his hand a bird that had alighted on the carriage, and showed it to his mother.

HIS MAJESTY OF SPAIN AT THE AGE OF FOUR.

As the young Sovereign, after the solemn ceremony in the cathedral, took his place under the white satin pallium, and passed down the aisle filled with the pomp of Church and State, the sun, streaming in Spanish intensity through the heavily-carved oaken doors of the cathedral, fell upon his face; he looked like some youthful knight of olden days. With his dark head held high and a look of resolution on his features that boded well for his subjects, he passed out of the cathedral into the sunshine and air thrilling with the applause of his people.

It was a fitting sign of respect to his father, Alfonso XII., that the first public ceremony after the celebration of his majority was the laying of a foundation-stone of a statue to be raised to his father in the Bel Retiro or Park of Madrid.

It is a proof of the Spanish king's appreciation of English horses that his steed on the great occasion of the Royal Review of May 19th came from our country. His skill in horsemanship was evidenced by the way he managed the spirited charger which he had only once mounted since its arrival in Spain three days before.



THE KING, AGED FIVE, ASTRIDE A FAVOURITE TOY HORSE.

After watching with keen interest the long files of infantry, cavalry, artillery, marines and royal regiments go by with the glitter, tramp, or the rattle and roar peculiar to each, the time came for the young king to leave his place by the royal box occupied by his mother, aunts and sisters, and to head the

brilliant company of generals ready for the procession. The royal boy-general, with the diffidence of youth, demurred, however, at passing alone before all the generals, grey with experience, and he signed to the Duke of Connaught to come to his side. But no, as king the young General had to take his place alone and it was alone he followed in the wake of his army, with the pageant of princes and generals in his train.

There was something pathetic in the sight of the slight young solitary figure, his oval face somewhat pale; firm, erect and soldierly on his spirited steed, he rode in his post of honour some paces before the company of commanders. The solitariness of his position seemed symbolic of the loneliness of the royal road, enviable as its splendour may seem to those who do not know its cares.

When on passing from the Prado into the Carrera of San Jeronimo, one of the soldiers of the advance guard was thrown from his horse, the young King showed his sympathetic nature by abstaining from further advance until the rider had remounted and assured him that he was not injured.

It was at the Royal Garden Party, to which the Queen graciously sent me an invitation, that one saw the pleasant relations existing between the Royal Family. The young King, cordial in his welcome to all guests, and receiving with kindness the mayors specially [illegible] to him, was never neglectful of his [illegible]. His arm was ever ready for his mother, and as he is nearly a head taller than the Queen he makes her no unfitting cavalier. The good Infanta Isabel, the late King's sister, who has always been such a loyal supporter of her sister-in-law, was much with the young monarch. Maria Theresa; and the Infanta Eulalia, as well known in Paris as in Spain for her charm and beauty, was gracious-ness herself. Noticing my little pocket Kodak, she allowed me to photograph her, and she has since expressed her approbation of the picture of which I here give a copy.

After the fatigue and strain of Royal banquets, receptions, etc., it was refreshing to see the young monarch giving vent to his youthful spirits [illegible] Battle of Flowers. His face shone with pleasure as from the royal box on the Course of the Bel Retiro he hurled flowers of all descriptions at the passing carriages. A bright smile overspread his countenance as carriages made of closely-packed flowers passed by in the form of a tea-pot, an old china jar, a Japanese fan, or a crocodile with wide open jaws, made of moss and flowers. The occupants of these vehicles had much ado to protect themselves from the storm of blossoms levelled at them by their young King.

Wednesday, the 14th May, saw the young King lay the foundation stones of some schools, of which the City stands in need, and on Saturday, the 24th May, he received at the National Library many scholars of the day.

Conspicuous, among the many men who attended this ceremony in college garb, was a handsome Spanish girl in the bright yellow hood and becoming tasselled cap of a doctor of medicine. She was one of the two women who have taken this Spanish degree.

The fêtes for the royal majority being over, the Court soon saw that Alfonso XIII., although now endowed with full sway over Spain, still graciously remembers that he is a son as well as King, a scholar as well as a ruler. Although obliged to take precedence of his mother in public he never does so in private, always waiting for her to enter the carriage, or leave the room before himself. He moreover gave orders to the commander of the garrisons that the Queen should always be accorded military honours, a custom that in Spain is not observed on ordinary occasions. In fact, as the Chamberlain expresses it so well, "the King is the model of a perfect gentleman and an affectionate son."

He still rises early. When his official duties are over, he takes a lesson in naval and military science, being deeply interested in both studies. His good feeling for the instructors of his boyhood is evidenced by his retention of General Herrero de Tejada, the former director of his studies, as his private secretary; his attachés who are on duty on alternate days are Lieut-Colonel de Moriga of the Artillery, and Major de Castelon. These appointments were made at his own express desire. He never misses a ride

on horseback each day or his fencing exercise. His mother and sister generally accompany him in his rides, and whilst at San Sebastian during this summer, the Royal party in two open carriages made expeditions to all the centres of industry in the neighbourhood, such as the linen factory, and the biscuit factory at Pasages, etc. The young King has been zealous in inspecting all the barracks and fortifications of the neighbourhood, as well as in visiting any man-of-war that may be stationed in the bay of the town.

QUEEN CHRISTINA, *Who has been such a wise and devoted mother to her boy the King.*

The young King is wise in seeking first to increase his own power of government by familiarising himself with all that comes under his ken in the town of San Sebastian, where he has already commenced to improve the condition of the soldiers with regard to their rations and the matter of their promotion. His great desire is to rule well and to [illegible] his people.

The young King made a most favourable impression on his subjects in the province of Guipuzcoa by the military way he held the grand review at San Sebastian in honour of the visit of Prince Komatsu from Japan, whence his Emperor had sent him to present the Order of the Chrysanthemum to the Princess of Asturias. The Japanese prince

THE KING, AS HE APPEARS AT THE PRESENT TIME. IN THE UNIFORM OF THE [illegible] AND AS CHIEF OF HIS NAVY.

then received the Order of Carlos III. from the hand of the young King.

The young Spanish King is physically strong, for although the heat was so intense on the day of the review for the Japanese prince that many of the soldiers collapsed, he rode about in cool unconcern.

His love of swimming, in which he excels, is daily gratified when at the seaside. He delights in all that he terms "English sport," and in his love of hunting, etc., he might almost be of British blood. He plays billiards for half-an-hour after each meal, and although he invites his guests to smoke during the game, he is not himself addicted to tobacco.

The extreme graciousness of the King and Queen was seen on the eve of their departure from San Sebastian, when they stopped to speak to a gentleman enthusiastic on the subject of the cinematograph. The King at once granted his request that he might supply the machine to the Royal family, saying that he himself would tell his Chargé d'Affaires to forward him the necessary document. In former times such a favour could never be addressed personally, and not granted without an intermediary.

The well-known General Weyler organised the first tour taken by Alfonso XIII. as sovereign of Spain. It must have been a solemn moment when Queen Maria Christina parted for the first time from her boy on July 31st for her visit to Vienna, whilst he made his tour in the Northern Provinces. Large crowds assembled at the Palace of Miramar as mother and son left together to part at Irun, on the frontier. The shore of the sea-port was crowded when the young King subsequently embarked on the Royal boat "Giralda," and accompanied by the warships "Rio de la Plata" and the "Temerario," put out to sea amid the cannon salutes of the ships, the shouts of the sailors, and the huzzas of the assembled spectators on shore.

The Royal youth's straightforward fearlessness of superstition was recently shown in a very interesting fashion at Oviedo. When inspecting the Relicts, after a service at the Cathedral, the Bishop of Oviedo showed the young King a small casket, saying: "This is closed, for anyone who opened it would die immediately," upon which Alfonso promptly returned, "Very well then, I will open it."

The young King has also promised to visit Bilbao after he has been to Santander and Pampeluna, and he will gradually make the acquaintance of all the cities and towns of note. The Spaniards are delighted at these proofs of their sovereign's wish for their welfare, and indeed, his bright intelligence and keen interest in all that concerns the country is leading the world to think that Queen Christina's great desire has been accomplished—that of making her son a king both good and great.

From a Snapshot.

THE INFANTA EULALIE AT THE ROYAL GARDEN PARTY.

THE TRAGEDIES OF CHILDHOOD—V.

From a drawing by F. Y. Cory.

HE RUNS AWAY FROM HOME—AND REGRETS IT.

By CHRISTINA GOWANS WHYTE.

Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

I.

SCHOOL opened at nine o'clock, and by half-past nine all of us in Class III. knew that Madge Leslie had christened the new arrival "The Beggar."

We could see where the last tuck had been let down in the dress the new girl wore, and her coat in the cloak-room was lined with two different kinds of remnants.

We were only eight or thereabouts, but we were very particular about clothes. Madge Leslie and Maud wore solid silk linings to their coats, and I suppose that made us extra particular.

The Beggar seemed to know what we thought of her at once. She was very pale and pretty, and dark curling hair fell about her shoulders. When she saw Madge Leslie looking at the place where the tucks had been let out, she wasn't pale a bit, however, for her face blushed a fiery red.

The Beggar was not very long in school before she had to stand up and spell. The word was "droop." She spelt it "d-r-o-o-p," while we, of course, always said "d-r-double o-p."

We all tittered. Instead of flushing again, the Beggar's cheeks grew whiter than ever, and we suddenly discovered that the teacher, Miss Mavor, was very angry. Miss Mavor had eyes which seemed to look past clothes and everything, right to the back of one's head, to find out all the things one knew and didn't want any one else to know.

This time she looked at us all very severely, but said nothing, and went on with the spelling lesson. Somehow the hardest words in the whole book seemed to come to those of us who had giggled the most, while the Beggar always had the very easiest. Madge Leslie stumbled over three. I remember them quite clearly—*investigate*, *surprised* and *movement*, and had to write them all out six times at home.

If Miss Mavor intended to be kind to the Beggar, she went quite the wrong way about it. Not one of us liked the Beggar one solitary little bit during that humiliating spelling-lesson. As for Madge Leslie, I think she really hated the Beggar then and afterwards.

At play-hour we all gathered round the Beggar and made remarks. When I think of it now, it seems dreadful; until you know how the Beggar rounded on us and had the best of the game.

At first she never said a word; just looked at us in a proud, tall way (she was taller than any of us in Class III.), and coloured up red every now and again. Some of the big girls came along, saying it was a shame of us to treat her so.

But when Madge Leslie began to sing—

"Hark! hark! the dogs do bark,
Beggars are coming to town,"

and they saw the tucks let down in the Beggar's dress, they giggled. After that, the Beggar treated them to a worse stare than any she had given us, and nobody tried to defend her any more.

Till one day Ethel Peabody asked her what sort of a mother she had. "She ought to dress you decently," she said.

School was just over, except for the biggest girls, and nearly everybody had been let out into the playground, through which we had to go to get home. Class III. was doing lots of different things, and we were all mixed in and out amongst the other girls. But of a sudden every one of us knew that the Beggar was standing against the wall and had begun to talk.

"WE CREPT UP TOWARDS THE WINDOWS. WE WERE ALL PRETTY FRIGHTENED BY THIS TIME."—(*p.* 946.)

We all gathered round her ready to make fun of her at the first opportunity.

"My mother!" the Beggar was saying, "What can any of you people know about my mother? She is lovely, like a princess. She wears sparkling, beautiful dresses with jewels all up and down them, and gold shoes, and pearls in her hair."

"Oh! oh!" cried tiny Lucy from the kindergarten, "tell pretty story please."

The elder girls laughed.

"You may laugh," said the Beggar, "but it's quite true. And my mother rides in a gold coach with six white horses."

I can see the Beggar now, as she stood there and let her imagination run away with her. Her dark eyes were flashing and her proud little head was flung back, so that her eyes looked down on most of us.

"My father and she ride about in their gold coach, and everybody bows to them. And my mother's house is full of beautiful things. Everything she touches turns to gold—all the tables are gold, and the stairs are gold, and the ornaments have diamonds set right through them."

It was a lovely story, and we were becoming interested. The Beggar, as we discovered then and afterwards, had an entrancing way of saying things. The eyes of the small girls became larger and larger as she went on, until Lucy's eyes in particular looked like two big saucers. As for the rest of us, the Beggar described such lovely and beautiful things, and drew herself up in such a proud way above us, that all at once even the solid silk linings of the coats belonging to Madge Leslie and Maud seemed very poor affairs indeed.

And when we had come to that way of thinking, the Beggar slung her bag of books sharply over her arm, and took her way home through the crowd of us like a young queen.

I think we all felt relieved when Madge Leslie broke the silence by saying:

"Of course that's a fib. She is a wicked, bad girl."

Class III. gathered under the school mulberry-tree. Yet even then, while we made plans to revenge ourselves, I think each of us

had an uncomfortable feeling that the Beggar ought not to be trifled with.

II.

We watched her go home from school the next day, and found out at last where she lived. A shaded lane, with high hedges on either side, led to a low gate, which clicked back with a spring when the Beggar had passed through.

The day after that was a school holiday, and we were all supposed to be picnicking with Madge Leslie in the pine woods. But instead we went straight to the lane which led up to the low gate at "The Beggar's Palace," as Madge Leslie had nicknamed it.

"We shall find out for ourselves how much of her story is true," Madge had said; "then afterwards she won't tell any more fibs of that sort." We were going up the lane at the time, and Ethel Peabody, as usual, began to back out of the thing. I suppose the dark lane did it. I know some of us felt rather queer then, too.

"I don't believe she was telling fibs. She was just making up a story for fun," she said.

"Funky funk," said Madge Leslie, who went and pinched Ethel to make her come on.

And we all said "Funky funk," too, just to show we weren't frightened a bit. But I couldn't get the Beggar's eyes out of my mind, nor the way she had looked at us when she left us that day in the playground.

It was Madge Leslie, of course, who clicked back the catch of the low gate, and we all filed in. Stretched out in front of us was a wide lawn, and at the far end a pretty cottage covered with roses and creepers. Nobody was in the garden, and, except for a long thin line of smoke which rose from a chimney, there was no sign of any kind of life at all.

The silence felt dreadful until Madge Leslie, who was really a very brave girl, proposed looking in at the windows, "to see about these gold chairs and tables and things," she said.

So we crept up towards the windows. I think we were all pretty frightened by this time. But, of course, nobody would give in. Just as we got near we heard a noise in the doorway, and one of us screamed. A lady stood on the steps looking at us. She was quite young and very pretty. She was not exactly like the Beggar, for instead of being dark her hair was a bright red-golden colour. But she stood looking at us just as the Beggar always did, and we felt quite sure then and there that she was the Beggar's mother. We never thought of discovering the beautiful dress and the jewels, we were too excited. I think the golden hair unnerved us; it looked so like a bit of the Beggar's story.

"Well, my dears," said the lady with a smile.

"We are at school with the Beg—" began Maud Leslie, but she stopped, "with your little girl," she added.

When Madge began to speak, the smile faded quite away from the lady's face. She looked down on us very proudly and haughtily. If none of us had known before, we might have seen then what a great lady she was. But Madge Leslie never noticed anything.

"She told fibs. She said you were a Princess. That your house was made of gold, because everything you touched turned into gold. And that you wore golden dresses with jewels in them. And it's all a fib, you just wear dresses like the Beggar" (it had slipped out at last) "and your house is covered with cheap creepers."

Madge Leslie stopped as the lady looked us up and down.

"What a horrid little set you are," she remarked, and every one of us went cold and hot by turns. Then her face broke and dimpled with smiles, and she suddenly went into the house again. We could hear her laughing in a room away beyond.

To be treated like silly children woke us all up. We were very indignant, especially now that the merry, haughty, sparkling eyes were no longer upon us.

"Let's look in," said Madge.

We stole up to a window and peeped. We were horror-struck. Madge Leslie clutched my hand and gasped.

Inside, a man, in a funny yellow coat, was bending over a blue flame, holding something there which spluttered and threw out white

lights and yellow lights, and horrid green sparks. The man held something to his face with one hand. When he turned suddenly round two huge eyes with horrid black rims looked out on us. He might have been the Evil Magician for all we knew.

Madge Leslie shrieked once and turned about. We all flew helter-skelter and screaming across the lawn. I don't know what we thought, except that the Beggar must have been telling the truth, and the whole house was bewitched.

When we reached the gate nobody could click back the catch. We screamed and tried to climb over. But at that moment the Beggar herself appeared on the other side of it. She seemed too surprised for anything, but clicked back the catch for us. We could have hugged her for that, but were too busy getting away to mind about her.

We got to the end of the lane and looked back. There were the Beggar and her mother standing at the gate gazing at us. The lady was laughing and had her arm round the Beggar. And somehow, for the first time, we knew that the Beggar was no beggar at all, but had a beautiful, lovely mother.

"I don't wonder she told stories about her, and was angry when we asked about her the way we did," said Ethel; and we all knew who the "shes" and "hers" meant. And we all repented, except Madge Leslie, who hated the Beggar all the more for the fright we had had.

The next day in school, at play-hour, little Lucy was discovered on the Beggar's knee, with half the kindergarten round about, listening to the low, beautiful voice telling fairy stories. Day after day the same thing occurred, until some of the rest of us sneaked round and heard little bits ourselves. The Beggar pretended she did not see us, until Ethel Peabody one day linked her arm in hers and walked part of the way home with the Beggar. We had all been terribly afraid of her before then, but after that the Beggar actually smiled on some of us, that beautiful smile which we had seen first on her mother's face.

The smile finished the Beggar's conquest of us all; we were her slaves afterwards. Her stories were ravishing, and we adored the secret which hid a great deal of her life from us. One or two of us, however, heard something about the man in the yellow coat, of the fierce, terrible eyes. We could not believe from the Beggar that he was good and very kind, and loved the beautiful lady with the red-gold hair. We tried to get the Beggar to make terrible stories about the man with the eyes, but she always laughed too much and would not be serious about it.

But we felt so very serious about it, that we

"THE BEGGAR'S STORIES WERE SIMPLY RAVISHING."

never once visited the house with the trailing rose-trees all the time we were friends with the Beggar.

And then one day, quite suddenly, the Beggar left school never to return again.

Miss Mavor told us that the Beggar's mother, who had once been a great lady, was going back to her friends. And Ethel Peabody's father read out of the newspapers how the Beggar's father had made a great discovery in chemistry or something, and that he was the most wonderful man alive. Then Ethel Peabody told us that her father had said that everything the Beggar's father touched turned to gold, which sounded more like a story come true than ever.

And, somehow, by that time we thought very little of the silk lining in Madge Leslie's cloak.

III.

We began to grow up afterwards, until we thought we were very grown-up indeed, especially Madge Leslie, who was half a head taller than any of us. When we were all about fifteen, her people moved to London, and she had no sooner arrived there than my Aunt Carrie invited Ethel Peabody and myself to town. So we all met and had glorious times together.

One day Aunt Carrie drove us to Hyde Park. We walked under the trees for a little, and watched hundreds of carriages roll by full of beautifully dressed people. By-and-by way was made for a Royal carriage, and the beautiful Princess came driving by. She bowed to right and left, but just as she passed near us she bowed specially to a carriage with blue and gold trappings. We could not see who was in the carriage till it moved past us afterwards. Then we discovered a lady with red-gold hair, and a lovely smile, and beside her a beautiful young girl whose dark curls fell about her shoulders.

"How lovely," said Madge, and suddenly gasped.

"It's the Beggar," we all whispered.

Just as though she had heard us the Beggar glanced up.

Of course, we thought she would cut us. But we found out then, as before, that we had never known the Beggar.

She smiled to us, spoke to her mother, and gave a quick, imperious order to the footman. The coachman pulled up a splendid pair of horses.

The Beggar sprang out.

"I'm so glad to see you," she cried; and we introduced her to Aunt Carrie.

We all went afterwards to tea with the Beggar and her mother. At tea-time the real Yellow Man of long ago appeared. He was tall and very handsome, and his hair was darker than the Beggar's curls. He made us all blush over our fright at the cottage window, and showed us afterwards the yellow coat and the huge magnifiers which had scared us so. And the Beggar took us through her beautiful house to her sitting-room, where she had lovely things all her own.

But while we were laughing and joking over the days when we had tormented and then made things up with the Beggar, I saw tears rise in the eyes of the Beggar's mother.

We still call her the Beggar. She knows we do, and likes it. For with all her grandeur and splendour, the Beggar nowadays is not half the proud girl she was long ago, when she stood quite poor and almost in rags near the mulberry-tree, and talked of everything turning to gold.

All these things happened some years ago, and just lately Ethel and I went to visit Madge in London. We had not long arrived when Madge came running into our room.

"The Beggar is going to be married," she said, and produced three notes addressed to each of us. We opened ours and read—

"Please come to dinner to-morrow.

"THE BEGGAR."

And down in the corner was scrawled—

"To meet King Cophetua."

"A real King," cried Ethel with a gasp of amazement. For we had come to expect any kind of distinction from the Beggar.

Madge looked very solemn.

"We shall go and ask her mother if it's true," she said gravely.

So we went, for the second and last time, by way of a joke in this case, and we met King Cophetua.

And the end of the story is that he and the Beggar were married, and now are living happily "ever after."

The Girls of the Fatherland.

By DARLEY DALE.

Illustrated by JEAN VICTOR BATES.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—*Our readers will be pleased, we are sure, to welcome the young Irish artist whose drawings of German girls appear here.* Miss JEAN VICTOR BATES *shows great promise, and we are delighted to give a place to her first work.*

"HIS SERENE HIGHNESS."

THE German girl is a long way behind the English girl in many ways; although of late years a great change, almost amounting to a revolution, has taken place in the lives of German girls, a typical German girl would still be voted not "up-to-date" by her English sisters.

Twenty years ago once a fortnight was considered quite often enough for a girl to go out for an afternoon walk in Germany; but then it must be remembered that in summer, the Germans live out of doors in their gardens, even in a town, much more than we do in England. They sit and have their meals, and work and read in the inevitable arbour, which almost every little garden possesses.

In those days the home-discipline was very strict; the watchword of the country "drill," was the motto even of family life, as the following example of domestic discipline will show.

It was then the custom in many families, as it is now, especially in the country, to wash only once in three months, and on these occasions—doubtless dreaded by the daughters of the house—it is their duty to iron, and to put away in large linen presses all the house-linen. The pile of heavy sheets must be stacked perfectly even, for the mistress of the house measures them with a long rod, and if she finds they are not quite straight she pulls the whole pile down, and the girls have to put it up again.

German women and girls have a mania for fine linen; they are always making or mending it, and invariably possess great quantities of house linen and underclothing. If you take up a German ladies' paper, you will find a large proportion of it devoted to patterns of elaborately embroidered under-garments; all classes pride themselves on having a large stock of linen, the quality, of course, varying with their means.

In olden times, when they spun the flax as well, it is difficult to conceive how a German girl ever had time to do anything but spin and sew. And even now an impressionist picture of a German girl would not be true unless the back-ground was linen-presses; perhaps a bicycle might be introduced in the foreground, but at present it does not play so important a part in the life of the girls as *die Wäsche*, the generic term for linen, does.

DIE WÄSCHE: A COUNTRY GIRL BUSY WITH THE MONTHLY WASHING.

When once a girl is betrothed, her time and that of the rest of the family is largely occupied in making a stock of linen large enough to last a long life-time. Apparently they care less for their outer-clothing, for as a rule German girls dress without much taste. Even when they have pretty clothes, they put them on badly, and often look untidy; while the peasants, who are abandoning their picturesque costumes for modern garments of a medley description, appear slovenly and shabby.

German girls have not good

"THE GERMAN GIRL IS PASSIONATELY FOND OF DANCING, AND DANCES WELL."

figures—they are too fat; it is their ambition to have what they call "an English figure," that is, to be slight and slender.

Many of them are pretty-looking, especially when they are quite young; but with the Germans beauty passes very quickly, a German woman, even if unmarried, at thirty looking as old as an English woman does at forty. This is partly because hitherto they have not taken so much exercise as English girls are allowed; the people are now, however, waking up to the fact that "drill" in a small quadrangle is not sufficient recreation for German school-girls, even when supplemented by a solemn walk in the afternoon with their mothers.

AN ENGLISH AND GERMAN CONTRAST.

This inaction is to be remedied by providing larger playgrounds in all the schools, private as well as public; and in addition to gymnastics, which have been regularly taught for the last few years in girls' schools, the girls are to learn bicycling, skating, and outdoor games, and are to have regular lessons from duly-qualified teachers in these sports. The Germans take life very seriously, even their recreations; the children are sedate little creatures, though not unhappy, for German parents are devoted to their children, and the ties of family life are stronger with them than with us.

In Germany, children, even when grown-up, show far greater respect to their parents and their grandparents than is the custom in this country; in that particular, and in several others, English girls might take a hint from their German cousins. There is rather a nice custom in German families at Christmas. On Christmas Day, when the children give their parents presents, having received their own on Christmas Eve, the parents take each child aside and tell him or her privately the thing in his or her conduct which has pleased them most in the past year, and then that which has most displeased them.

The first great event in a German girl's life takes place, if she is a Lutheran, when she is about fifteen—that is, her Confirmation; great preparation is required for this ceremony, which is virtually compulsory, for those girls who have to earn their living can get no appointment without a certificate of Confirmation.

"THE GERMAN GIRL IS VERY DOMESTIC."

The girls are often betrothed when very young, and from the day of bethothal, when a large party is generally given, the girl is called the bride until her marriage; a betrothal is looked upon as rather more sacred than an engagement is in this country, and though it does not always end in

A KAFFEE-KLATSCH.

THE SOFA IS THE SEAT OF HONOUR SET APART FOR MARRIED LADIES. WHAT IS TO BE DONE IN A CASE OF THIS KIND?

marriage, it is very rarely that one is broken off when it has got so far as a betrothal. A year or longer often intervenes between betrothal and marriage, during which time the bride and bridegroom are allowed to meet frequently at each other's houses.

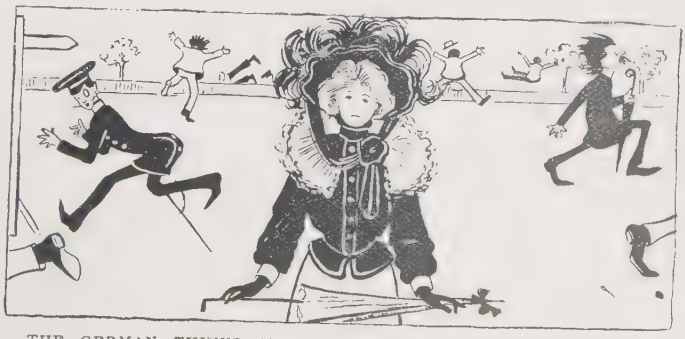
German girls do not have afternoon tea-parties, tea being less popular than coffee, but they have what we fear would be voted deadly dull here, coffee parties called *Kaffee-Klätsche*. A *Kaffee-Klatsch* means a coffee-gossip, and is as nearly a slang expression as a German girl, who eschews slang as she would all evil, ever makes use of.

A *Kaffee-Klatsch* is given in the evening, and no boy or man is admitted, only women and girls. The married and elder women all sit solemnly on one side of the room, and the girls on the other side; they have coffee and cakes and sweetmeats of various kinds, and they don't forget the gossip. Sometimes they play cards or other games, or they have music; but though they are musical as a nation, or, perhaps, just because they are, every girl does not play and sing "a little." When a German girl plays or sings she does it well, but those who have no talent do not bore their friends with their performances. Talking of sweetmeats reminds us that German girls are passionately fond of sweets, and eat quantities: the attention of the English visitor to Germany is always attracted to the large number of sweet-shops in German towns.

THE YOUNG GIRLS' TABLE AT A KAFFEE-KLATSCH.

Unless they have had an English governess, or intercourse with English people, German girls have not very many games; lawn tennis and croquet are getting more common now, and the bicycle is somewhat slowly and solemnly making its way about the country.

German girls are much more domestic than English girls, and perform many little duties in the house that would be left to servants, as a rule, in the same class of life in this country. For instance,



THE GERMAN THINKS AN ENGLISH WIFE TOO EXTRAVAGANT: "*I* COULD NOT AFFORD SUCH HATS!" *Exit.*

it is the custom, even among the nobility, for the daughters of the house to wash up the breakfast and tea-things, which are often of beautiful old china, and very valuable.

To be a good *Hausfrau*, or *Hausmütterchen*, is the ideal at which, till quite lately, all German girls were taught to aim; and although they are as well, if not better educated than English girls, they spend much more time in the kitchen, cooking, or in doing various household duties.

THE WEAKNESS OF FEMININE GERMANY.

They are very fond of needlework of all kinds. One of their favourite kinds of fancy-work is German cross-stitch on linen, the canvas-threads being afterwards drawn out, for the girls of the Fatherland are very persevering and plodding, and to them, at least, the wits' definition of embroidery as "cutting holes in calico and sewing them up," would not appear to be waste of time.

"THE GERMAN GIRL IS VERY SENTIMENTAL."

But in Germany, as elsewhere, the girls nowadays are less content to stay at home. The German girl, like her English sister, is now on the look out for a career—to be doctors, or deaconesses, or nurses, or teachers of some kind, or journalists or novelists, or artists; or, among the commercial classes, clerks; and there, as here, various occupations are being thrown open to them. Some of them are lady-gardeners—that is rather a popular occupation; many of them are designers of patterns for fancy work for the numerous magazines. But in Germany there is an examination to be passed before any appointment can be obtained. A German girl has always to be taught and trained to do whatever she takes up, if she wants to earn money, for Germany is a land of examinations and certificates.

The manners and customs vary very much in different parts of the country, and among the different classes of society; but, speaking generally, the girls are less refined than those in the corresponding class of life in England. There is a vein of coarseness in the German character which shows itself in the girls also. They are not such good horsewomen as the Austrians, and, we are thankful to say, no German girls smoke cigarettes as Austrian women do; they are thoroughly womanly, and like the amusements and occupations of women better than those of men.

They are very sentimental, but this is hardly to be wondered at, considering what sentimental trash the novels provided for their amusement are, and their sedentary habits of life foster this tendency; if they were allowed more outdoor exercise and amusement and fewer silly novels, they would be happier and healthier in mind and body. They would also stand more chance of possessing the "English figure" they admire and envy.

In some parts of Germany, when a German girl marries, a yew-tree is decorated with ribbons and brought to her by the village girls on the morning of her marriage. She stands at the door and gives a piece of wedding-cake to all the villagers; that is, if she be a girl of the upper classes.

German girls look forward to marriage as their ultimate fate more than girls in England do, but there is a great difference in this respect

IN A BIERGARTEN: FATHER AND DAUGHTER.

between the Lutherans and Catholics. Catholic girls are almost invariably educated in convents, and, unless they marry, generally become nuns. For Lutheran girls of the upper classes who do not marry, provision is made by the Government. When they reach a certain age they are allowed to join what is called a "*Stiftsdame*"; a kind of secular convent, where they all live in the same building, but each lady has her own apartments. They also enjoy a pension, which varies in different places. There are a few rules which they have to keep, but they are not at all strict or irksome; and they enjoy the title of canoness, which is a remnant of the old Catholic times, when these institutions were religious houses with a strict rule, and the canonesses led a life of close seclusion and ceaseless prayer.

TO THE OPEN-AIR LIFE OF THE CAFÉ THE GERMAN GIRL BECOMES RAPIDLY INURED.

Now a "*Stiftsdame*" can go into society, or have friends to stay with her, or give a "*Kaffee-Klatsch*" in her rooms; it is a position much desired by unmarried women.

German girls are just now in a transition stage; they are struggling to obtain the same position that English and American girls enjoy. They have a great admiration for English girls, and English manners and customs, and whenever they come in contact with them, they pay them the most sincere of all compliments—imitation.

They are passionately fond of dancing, and dance well, though not gracefully; for the Germans romp tremendously in dancing, and waltz very fast, taking very long steps and keeping it up from the first to the last bar of music. Strange to say, two girls would be allowed to go to the theatre without an escort or chaperon; this is because their parents generally subscribe for the season, so they have their own special seats. They do not go in evening dress, except to the opera; but of late years they are beginning to copy the English custom, and at grand concerts they do now wear a sort of demi-toilette, not full evening-dress.

They enjoy a great deal more liberty than French girls; they are allowed to walk out without a chaperon in the large towns, and their walks now are of more frequent occurrence than in the last generation. But domesticity is still the rote of the average German girl's life.

A QUESTION.

LOOK, Nurse, there's *another* new moon in heaven!
The angels use up an awful lot:
I've quite lost count—and I'm only seven—
I wonder how many more they've got?

When my frocks wear out, I have heard you say,
You will make some more out of dear Mamma's—
Well, ... when angels take the old moons away,
Do they cut them in pieces to make the stars?

KILDA KILROY.

By Mrs. DE HORNE VAIZEY.

Author of "Rhoda: A Public School Story."

Illustrated by PAUL HARDY.

SYNOPSIS.

PHILIPPA, MADGE, THEO and HOPE, are the four daughters of Edgar Charrington, a man of exceptional genius. He dies, leaving to his girls and boys the slender legacy of £2,000 with which to equip themselves for the battle of life. The girls have inherited their father's genius; Hope is an accomplished musician; Madge a clever artist; Theo a budding author. Philippa, the eldest girl, is the housekeeper. They come to London, against the advice of Mrs. Loftus, their father's sister, and take a small flat in Tottenham Court Road, and there expend their capital in securing a good start in their various professions. Stephen goes to a solicitor's firm, Barney into an insurance office, and Madge to the Slade School. Though they become disillusioned of their hopes of a speedy success, the girls greatly enjoy life in the flat. Below them lives a crusty bachelor, an author of some note, with whom the girls, though they first regard him with scorn, afterwards become firm friends. They nickname him "The Hermit."

Hope goes to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Loftus at their shooting-box in Norfolk. She meets there a Ralph Merrilies, who is unusually kind to her. He advises her to organise an entertainment for the amusement of children. She does this and makes a certain sort of success, but not a satisfying one. Hope would greatly like to be friends with him, but Truda Bennett, a vivacious member of the house-party, has warned her that she is "especially interested" in Ralph. Ralph asks Hope when she is leaving if he may call on her at the flat. Hope, thinking always of Truda, puts him off with an excuse. Some time after she meets Mrs. Loftus, who gives her to understand that Truda is engaged to Ralph. Hope is heartbroken.

Barney gives the girls much trouble. They find he is betting. Madge upbraids him bitterly for squandering money, when his sisters are so hard pressed. The next morning Barney has disappeared. No trace can be found of him, though Steve and the "Hermit" hunt assiduously.

CHAPTER XXII. *(continued).*

MARY opened the door, and some one entered the tiny passage to an accompaniment of gasps and groans, and rustlings of silken skirts; the air became laden with a strong, heavy scent, and a second after Minnie Caldecott staggered into the room, and sank down on the nearest chair.

"Where is your lift! You horrible girls, what do you mean by not having a lift? I'm *dead!*" she announced, tragically, fanning herself with the ends of a chiffon boa, and puffing and blowing in quite an alarming fashion, until, suddenly catching sight of the Hermit at the other end of the room, she sat up straight in her chair, and recovered her breath with remarkable celerity. The Charrington girls had never before seen the fair Minnie in the presence of a member of the opposite sex, and the scene which followed filled them with delighted amusement. The lady elaborately prepared herself for the fray; she set her hat at a more becoming angle, pulled out the little curls under the veil, and while ostensibly addressing herself to her friends, sent fascinating glances across the room with her big blue eyes. The man hunched his shoulders, screwed up his brows, and looked helplessly miserable and ill at ease. He would have given the world to escape, but the buxom figure barred the way, and he lacked the courage to pass by. There was nothing for it but to sit still until she chose to depart.

"Well, I'm thankful I have found you in after that climb. You must think twice before you go out, when you live in a bird's nest like this! I nearly turned back, but I wanted particularly to

see you about some business." She caught Hope's eager glance and shook her head in reply. "Nothing for you, dear. No more songs just now—I say! you *are* white. What's the matter? Have you been ill?"

"Not ill exactly,—we have had an anxious time lately." Hope could not bring herself to speak of Barney to Minnie Caldecott, but her cheeks grew pink even as she spoke, for she knew that she was using the boy's disappearance as a cloak behind which to hide the real trouble which was sapping her strength. Miss Caldecott nodded her head, however, as though she understood all about the matter, and said cheerfully:—

"Still trying to make your fortune! Better give it up, my dear, and follow my example . . . . I'm going to be married"—she threw a deprecatory glance at the Hermit, as though condoling with him on his own late arrival on the scene—"told you I should come to that before long! Fact is the public is getting tired of me and running after newer singers, and I must do something to improve my position, so the day is fixed for the third week in January, and on the fifteenth of December Minnie Caldecott gives a grand farewell concert, when all her friends in the profession will give their services for her benefit!"

"How kind of them," said Hope. "I hope you will be very happy, but are you really going to retire so soon! Your voice is so fresh still,—you are so young."

The bride-elect laughed her large, hearty laugh. "How old would you think I was?" she inquired, and this time she addressed the Hermit in such a marked manner that he could not choose but reply. He looked annoyed, however, and the pedantic manner was at its height as he said, shortly, "I am afraid I must confess that I have not thought about the subject at all!"

"Think now!" said Minnie, staring at him with her wide blue eyes. She was like a big baby, Madge reflected, a huge wax doll, just as smooth, and pink and white, and chubby—just as vacant and soulless in expression. "Out with it! Don't be afraid," she cried; and the Hermit thus goaded ventured a leap in the dark.

"I should say somewhere about thirty."

Miss Caldecott turned a horrified face towards her friends.

"Well, *he* doesn't know how to pay compliments. Thirty, indeed! I'm only twenty-nine, and in the profession we always knock off five years. No, I am not going to retire. I know a trick worth two of that. A few months later there will be another concert—'first appearance since her marriage'—and a year or two after that a second farewell. I want to make a big splash with this first one, and it occurred to me the other day that you might help me." Her eyes wandered round the room until they rested on Madge's thin face. "You are the one I want. You designed that swell leaflet for your sister's entertainment. Don't you think it would be a good chance for you to do one for me, now?"

Madge looked at her quizzically. The Charringtons had learned by this time that in spite of her beaming good nature, Miss Caldecott was a keen business woman, and that in dealing with her it was necessary to look well after one's own interests. "I am not certain that I can undertake any fresh orders just now. I am so busy with my advertisements," Madge replied, grandiloquently, glancing the while at the table in the window on which lay the roll of the nursery frieze, now approaching completion. As she had expected, Miss Caldecott insisted upon seeing it, and went into raptures over a spirited rendering of Hi Diddle Diddle. The cat was evidently of Cheshire origin, to judge from its bland and benign expression; the cow was in the act of drawing itself together for the fateful leap, while the moon rolled apprehensive eyes towards it, and the little dog clasped its fore-legs over its heart in an ecstasy of amusement. In the distance a gentlemanly-looking dish was dragging a swooning spoon in its wake. It was very funny, very clever, very original, for Madge, like Theo, had been working

"MINNIE CALDECOTT SANK INTO THE NEAREST CHAIR."—(*p.* 954.)

at high pressure, and had been inspired to do her best, in the hope of paying a part, at least, of Barney's debts, and thereby giving a sop to her troubled conscience. "I am not quite sure who shall have it, Mason's or Fearings," she said, languidly, mentioning the two largest West End furnishers, in reply to Miss Caldecott's enquiry as to the destination of the design. "It depends, of course, upon which makes the highest offer." She turned her head cautiously to grimace at her sisters, and beheld the Hermit wreathed in smiles, nodding encouragement, waving his hand as if imploring her to keep it up. His delight, contrasted with the baffled expression on Minnie's chubby face, proved almost too much for Madge's composure, but she busied herself with covering up the sketches, and presently returned to her seat, and smiled with bland patronage upon her visitor.

"And now—er—about this concert?"

"Herman is going to sing, and Marie Ross, and—" Miss Caldecott reeled off the names of half-a-dozen well-known artistes, checking them on her fingers with an air of triumph. "They are all *giving* their services. My dear, it would be the finest advertisement you could have! Make up something original and striking in the way of a programme, and they will all be eating out their hearts with jealousy. You don't know what we are in the profession, but I do! and you may take it from me that every one of them will determine on the spot that she will have something even better when it comes to her turn. You will have your name printed in the corner. I will crack you up as the coming artist, and they will all be running after you, and giving you more commissions than you can take—"

"On the same terms?" queried Madge, blandly, "Because if so, I hardly see where the artist comes in. There must be reciprocity in these things, Miss Caldecott! I cannot work for nothing. Now, for instance, if you were going to sing Hope's song. . . ."

Miss Caldecott looked shocked at the suggestion.

"My dear girl, it's impossible! I'm booming three songs for publishers just now, and get half-a-guinea apiece every time I sing them. That is what Hope should do—get some firm to push her things, and pay for having them sung. She will never make a name until she does."

"Just so, but as she is young and unknown, they don't feel inclined to help her. It would help matters considerably if you would give 'The Song of Sleep' as an encore at your concert. You might possibly lose ten-and-sixpence, but,—on the other hand my charge for an illustrated programme is five guineas! You would have the best of the bargain."

In the silence which followed the Hermit's chuckle of delight was distinctly audible. Minnie looked at him sharply, nodded her head as if in sympathy with his enjoyment, and cried laughingly:

"*She'll* get on! No fear for her. Knows how to look after herself, and her sister too. Very well then, it shall be an encore, but you must do your best for me, mind! Something very fetching. If you could give a hint of a wedding it would be a good idea. I don't want the audience to think I am retiring through old age. Thirty, indeed!" and she threw an indignant glance at the Hermit, the while Madge laughed, and suggested,—"Wedding bells, and a wreath of orange-blossoms as a bordering?"

"Yes, yes! Just the thing. Bring the sketch to show me, and we can consult about it together, for I really can't manage these stairs again. I'm so pleased it's all settled!" She rose as she spoke, and prepared to take her leave, but as she did so her eye fell on the row of photographs on the chimney-piece, and she walked forward to examine them in her usual free-and-easy fashion.

"Family pictures! There is Hope—not half pretty enough though! That was your father, I suppose. So clever, wasn't he? By-the-way, how is that young brother of yours getting on?"

If a thunderbolt had fallen through the roof, the occupants of the room could hardly have been more startled than they were by this simple question. This was Miss Caldecott's first visit to the flat; Barney's name had never been mentioned in her presence; how then did she come to know of his existence? The shadow which had been pushed aside for a few minutes now returned more heavily than ever, and the pale, tense faces of the four girls startled the innocent questioner.

"What is the matter? What have I said? Nothing to worry you, have I?"

"We are in trouble about our brother, Miss Caldecott. He has—disappeared!" said Philippa, resting both hands on the back of a chair to hide their trembling. "Do you mind telling us how you came to know him?"

"But I don't know him . . . only heard his name casually from a friend. Handsome boy, isn't he?—musical—sings comic songs and dances breakdowns—up to all sorts of fun?"

"Yes, yes!" cried the sisters in concert. The Hermit drew near, forgetting his embarrassment in his anxiety to hear what might be told, the five pairs of eyes were fixed hungrily on the silly, pretty face, and even as they looked they saw it change,

they saw it soften into sympathy, and grow sweet, and earnest, and womanly.

"And he has run away, has he? and you are sitting at home waiting for him, and breaking your hearts. Poor little girls! Wouldn't it be lovely if I helped you to find him, after all? Now I'll tell you all I know. I had some friends in the other night, and one of the men was turning over my songs, and found 'The Song of Sleep.' We laughed about it a good deal, for I told him it was half my own composition. He noticed the name—'Hope Charrington'—and said he knew a young fellow of that name, who was one of the most amusing boys he had ever met, and could sing a rattling comic song. He is by way of being musical, this man I am speaking of, and is fond of having little sing-songs at his rooms. I asked one or two questions, found out that he must be your brother, and told Jim I would warn you that he was not a fit companion for a lad. Oh, I was only in fun—there's no real harm in Jim, but he is in rather a fast, betting set, and I have a young brother of my own. I know how I should feel about it. I determined to give you a hint next time we met, and I *did* remember, didn't I! I am so glad I didn't forget!"

The look of elation which accompanied the last words brought a smile to Hope's face. She had reason to know Miss Caldecott's powers of forgetting, and it argued a wonderful amount of interest that she should have remembered Barney in the midst of the exciting preparations for her benefit concert. She slipped her hand through the plump arm and pressed it gently, while Philippa asked half-a-dozen breathless questions.

"How long ago was that? Have you heard nothing since? Where had he met Barney? Is he in an insurance office?"

"Insurance? No, that is not it. He has quite a good berth somewhere—shipping office, I think. Their ships go out to the Cape."

She drew her breath sharply as she finished her sentence, and to judge by the startled look which went round, the same thought had flashed through every mind. "Shipping! Ships that went out to the Cape! What better means by which to frustrate the most diligent search! Barney had always had a craving for the sea, and if this unknown Jim had

STEVE AND THE GIRLS WATCH THE DINERS AT THE CARLTON.—(*p.* 961.)

influence in his office, and felt himself even indirectly responsible for the trouble in which the boy found himself—what more likely than that he would help him to a fresh start!"

"I shouldn't wonder one bit if that is the explanation of it!" cried Minnie triumphantly. "Two to one he has gone off in one of their boats, and a very good thing if he has. Nothing knocks the nonsense out of a boy like a good long voyage. He'll be so thankful to get back that he will settle down to anything you like to mention. Got into trouble, I suppose, before he went? Nothing serious, I hope?"

She had shown herself so kind and sympathetic that Philippa could not refuse to reply, and Minnie listened to the story of Barney's debts with indulgent sympathy.

"And so he ran away from them! Just what I have longed to do myself a dozen times over. Now you will want to see Jim, and hear what he has to say. I shall be passing near his lodgings on my way home, and if Mr.—er—Neil, isn't it? likes to come with me, we might interview him together. He gets home by half-past five, as a rule."

She looked coquettishly at the Hermit, who was immediately seized with a paroxysm of embarrassment, twitched nervous fingers, and looked as supremely miserable as if his last hour had come. With the energy of despair he managed to blurt out a few words to the effect that—"Stephen, Mr. Charrington—home presently—like to be present. After dinner perhaps—could go together if Miss Caldecott kindly—left address!"

"Well, *he* doesn't know how to flirt!" Minnie exclaimed blightingly five minutes later as she and Hope stood in the little hall for a few parting words. "Can't understand a man like that, no patience with him either. No relation of yours I hope, dear?"

"None whatever, but oh, Minnie, you should not want to flirt when you are engaged! I do hope you are not going to be married just because you are tired and discouraged, and need a rest; I do trust you are not making a mistake!" cried Hope earnestly. "Are you quiet sure you care for him, and can be happy?"

Miss Caldecott laughed lightly. "My dear," she said, "if I look thirty in my very best new veil, it is more than time I was married. And I am so tired of paying my own bills. Jack is very well off, and I intend to make his money fly. It will be a new experience to spend money that someone else has earned." She paused, looked for a moment into Hope's wistful face, and added impulsively, "If you will promise faithfully never to tell Jack if you should meet him, I'll let you into a secret. I'm frightfully happy! I've been in love with him for years! It was difficult to make up my mind when I had been my own mistress so long, but now that I have given in, I wouldn't go back for the world. It *is* nice to be loved and taken care of, far nicer than being independent. You will find that out for yourself some day, soon."

"Dear Minnie, I am so glad! I do congratulate you with all my heart, and 'Jack' too! You will make such a nice, cheerful, good tempered wife!" cried Hope bravely, whereat Miss Minnie indulged in an elephantine by-play of bashfulness, and ran rustling down the staircase.

"An appalling woman!" the Hermit was reiterating in the drawing-room, but none of the sisters would agree with this denunciation.

"She doesn't wear her heart on her sleeve, neither do we!" maintained Hope. "She is ever so much nicer when you know her really well."

"She shows great perspicuity in her judgment. Did you hear her say that I was sure to get on?" cried Madge, and Theo smiled as at a pleasant recollection.

"Did you notice how her face softened when we spoke of our trouble! Her lips drooped, and her eyes grew so soft and liquid. My next heroine shall have eyes like that!"

"And if she helps us to find Barney," sighed Philippa softly, "I shall bless the name of Minnie Caldecott as long as I live!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

IT can be imagined with what eagerness Steve was greeted on his return from the City that evening, how he was hurried through his dinner, and despatched forthwith in company with the Hermit to interview "Jim," otherwise Mr. James Matthews. The time of waiting seemed unbearably long, but when the two men returned it was at once evident that they were the bearers of good news. The companion of the newspaper shop had been found at last, while Barney himself was now on his way to the Cape, working for his passage in the capacity of steward! Briefly, the tale which Mr. Matthews had to tell, was as follows. He had made the boy's acquaintance in a luncheon bar, had been attracted by his breezy, high spirits, and taken some pains to arrange further meetings. The two had attended theatres and concerts together, and finally Barney had visited his new friend in his rooms, and become the confidant of certain betting transactions in which he was in the habit of indulging. The boy had begun to bet on his own account, had been unlucky, and had called at

the shipping office one day, declaring himself in trouble at home, and anxious to get out of the country for a time, at least. Mr. Matthews told him that his only chance was to ship as a steward, and Barney, being not only willing but eager, was sent to wait his turn at Southampton, and had been fortunate in finding an opening three days after his arrival. "Jim," as Miss Caldecott had called him, appeared to be a good-natured, easy-going individual with little sense of responsibility. When sternly questioned by Steve as to whether he considered it right to encourage a boy of seventeen to bet, he smilingly declared that "Everyone did it—even the little office-boys put their coppers on the races!" and refused altogether to acknowledge that he should have consulted Barney's friends before sending him abroad.

"But you were the very people he wanted to avoid! There is no need to worry yourself, my good sir. He has signed for the round voyage, and you will see him back in a couple of months, all the better for having to rough it a bit, and finding out what hard work means!"

This was his opinion, and on the whole Barney's brother and sisters were inclined to agree. After the suspense of the past weeks it was a blessed relief to hear definite news, and, with a good ship and a good captain, there was little fear of the boy's safety. There was just a chance that letters written at once might arrive at Capetown before the vessel sailed on her homeward voyage, and Philippa was already rehearsing loving messages, when Madge cried eagerly:

"Can't we *do* something to celebrate the occasion? Not to-night, I mean, but to-morrow. We have been in the depths for so long that we need a little festivity. I'm *tired* of being miserable!" She felt a passing wonder as to the meaning of Hope's quick frown, but Theo chimed in with an eager assent, and even the grave Steve stretched himself, as if throwing off a burden, and looked pleased at the suggestion.

"I believe we should all be the better for a change. There has been too much work and too little play, lately, to be good for any of us. The question is: What can we do that is cheap and exciting?"

Madge's grimace was the reverse of approving.

"The greatest change we could have, would be to be expensive and lazy. It is not my idea of pleasure to stand shivering in a *queue* for a couple of hours, and hunt for omnibuses after a performance. I want to see how the other people live—the people who toil not, neither wear their last year's clothes! I should like to dine at the Carlton, and sit in the hall after dinner, watching the coming and going, the pretty girls in their fashion-plate cloaks, and the old ladies in sables and diamonds going out to theatres, and evening receptions, and watch the flirtations, and listen to Theo making up stories. It would be so good for us both—we should get lots of ideas!"

"I'm afraid—" began Steve, the prudent; but the Hermit did not give him time to finish. "I will engage a table at the Carlton to-morrow morning," he cried; "you shall all come and dine with me. It is a capital idea! I'm very much obliged to Miss Madge for suggesting it!"

Polite murmurs of dissent greeted this speech. Steve cried, "No, no, my dear fellow! We couldn't think of it!" Philippa blushed, and declared, "You mustn't, Mr. Neil! You really mustn't"; but the Hermit was firm, and would brook no refusal.

"It is impossible for me to entertain at home, and it is quite time you dined with me for a change. I have been your guest for about fifty Sunday-night suppers."

"Cold roast beef and beetroot in winter; cold lamb and mint sauce in summer! There is an appalling lack of variety in the menus of an English household," said Madge with an expressive grimace. "When I am married, I shall make a point of serving my loved one with constant surprises!"

"You will find it more difficult than painting pictures! What is one to do in winter when poultry is so dear, and none of the nice, spring things have come in?" queried the dear, literal Martha—looking straight at the Hermit as she spoke, as if asking him to vindicate her housekeeping abilities, the which he proceeded to do with a zeal untempered by knowledge, while Hope studied his face with anxious eyes, and Madge sat silent, a monument of long-chinned solemnity!

No further objections were made to the Hermit's invitation, which in truth was too tempting to be refused, and the next morning was spent in hunting up old fineries, turning ribbons, washing laces, and sewing them on again, in as near an imitation of the latest Parisian fashion as could be obtained with insufficient quantities and 'prentice fingers.

"To think that it is eighteen months since I wore an evening dress!" sighed Madge tragically. "Do you remember how I talked of holding a salon for all the greatest intellects in London? It is rather a come-down to reflect that the Hermit is the only youngish man who has crossed this threshold since we came. And he is no good to me either, for . . . ."—she looked round the room to make sure that Philippa was not present—

"I'll tell you a secret, Theo. He is not falling—he could not do anything so precipitate—he is *crawling* in love with Phil; but he will never find it out unless somebody tells him!"

"I'll tell you another stale item—Phil is crawling in love with him too, but wild horses wouldn't make her confess it. If he ever winds himself up to proposing, she will refuse him for the sake of the family, and never say a word about it, but only snap off our heads, and grow so cross and cantankerous that there will be no living with her!"

This from Theo. The other ungrateful sister shrugged her shoulders and exclaimed: "What a nuisance it is when people *will* make martyrs of themselves! Now it would really be very nice if Phil lived on the next landing, and could run in and out half-a-dozen times a day, and though the Hermit 's not my passion, he is a worthy old thing, and would make a devoted husband. It strikes me, my dear, that you and I will have to take this matter in hand. It is no use asking Hope. She has grown so proper lately, that I am quite afraid of her."

"Oh, no; we won't ask Hope!" said Theo quickly; "but really it would be rather fun to see what we could do—as good as a story in real life. The first step is to make them aware of their own feelings—but how is it to be done?"

"We might try jealousy! How would it be if I flirted with him violently under her very eyes?"

"He would be horribly bored, without understanding in the least what you were trying to do, and Phil would forbid him the house, in case you were blighted in your youthful affections!"

"Should we take him aside then, and drop a casual hint of the curate who proposed to her in Leabourne!"

"My dear, he would take fright on the moment and consider it his duty to stand aside in favour of a better man. He is so absurdly quixotic, that he would positively enjoy immolating himself!"

"What about pity, then? Snub Phil violently in his presence, and confide to her in secret, that his cough sounds consumptive! That would make them sorry for each other, you see, and rouse a desire to help. They would sympathise, and grow sentimental, and . . ."

"It might do!" said Theo thoughtfully. "Really, Madge, you ought to write instead of me—you are far more inventive. My only idea is propinquity! Impress upon Phil that the Hermit is her best counsellor in all matters concerning Barney, and advise her to talk things over quietly with him, when Steve is not present. The Hermit has about as much worldly wisdom as a babe in arms, and consequently would be immensely flattered at being asked to impart it. He will repeat all her suggestions with an air of wisdom, and Phil will dote upon him for helping her to her own way!"

"Propinquity does it! We will be as innocent as cherubs, and have smashing headaches when he comes to call. Also, it might be well to take a more active share in the housekeeping department, in order to show Phil that she is not so indispensable as she imagines. We must be cruel to be kind!"

Theo's shoulders shook with laughter, and just at that moment in marched Philippa herself, looking round with an air of surprise.

"What is the matter with you two this morning? You are giggling like a couple of school-girls."

"We are so excited at the prospect of this evening! What have *you* been so busy about in your room? Writing to Barney?"

"N—not just lately!" faltered Phil, and blushed in guilty fashion. As a matter of fact she had been trying experiments in hairdressing, and studying her profile to see which arrangement gave the best effect to—er—to any one who happened to be seated by her side! "How are you getting on with your work?" she asked, eager to change the subject, when Madge held up the venerable chiffon bodice on which she had been sewing "applications" of lace, and regarded it with critical approval.

"Subdued elegance is to be the key-note of my costume! I shall wear no jewels. I don't think it is in good taste for a young girl to wear valuable diamonds. What do you think of the arrangement of lace? Exact copy of one of Lady Godiva's dinner dresses as drawn in last week's *Queen*. Wouldn't it be thrilling if I were mistaken for her, and written about in the papers? The only drop of bitterness in my cup is the want of an evening cloak! It does give one away so horribly to go in in a golf cape!"

"No one will know you, dear! No one will look at you!"

"Do you mean that for comfort, may I ask? I *want* to be looked at! 'Tis sad to think no eye will watch for us, and grow brighter when we come!'" quoted Madge in sentimental accents, which made Philippa giggle in her turn. Then for some mysterious reason she blushed again, and strolled over towards the window.

"Hot, dear?" queried Madge blandly. "Room rather warm, perhaps—too big fire."

"So extravagant, too, on a mild day like this I really must speak to Mary about using so much coal," said Theo with a frown. She went on with her sewing, apparently unconscious of the wide-eyed amazement with which Philippa regarded her. The skies were going to fall indeed when

Miss Theo troubled herself about an item of domestic economy!

There was something rather pathetic about the glee with which the four sisters made their toilettes a few hours later. The night's entertainment, which would have seemed so tame and ordinary to most girls of their age, appeared a very frenzy of excitement after their year of hard work and privation. They laughed and chattered like so many magpies, ran about from room to room in lace petticoats, and pretty low bodices, and sat in turns before the dining-room fire, while Hope—happy possessor of natural curls!—heated irons, and waved and crimped with such artistic skill, that, as Madge gleefully declared, the three heads were "transformations" indeed, far more like toupées than natural growth! Philippa wore her mother's lace, which gave a regal air to the old black silk dress; Hope was lovely as usual in her professional white; Madge's "subdued elegance" proved exceedingly becoming; but Theo was distinctly the most imposing figure of the four. She possessed the Frenchwoman's talent for putting on her clothes, and adding those little touches which go so far towards making an effective whole, and her sisters exclaimed with surprised admiration as she came rustling into the drawing-room, a chaplet of violets crowning the graceful head, and a couple of black feathers fastened jauntily at the side of the low corsage by a paste buckle, which looked exactly like a family heirloom, and not in the least as if it had been unpicked from the side of a felt hat but ten minutes before! Thrown over her shoulders, too, was quite a vision in the way of evening cloaks, manufactured out of a summer cape, a lace collar, and the beloved feather boa tacked on as an edging. The cape was unlined, and far too thin a covering for a winter evening, but, girl-like, Theo declared that she was "broiled," and insisted that suffocation would be the result of wearing the nice, warm, ugly shawl which Philippa pressed upon her.

The Hermit came upstairs in his dress clothes, bearing in his hands four immaculate white camellias, which had seemed to his old-fashioned notions appropriate offerings to present to his girl guests. It was sweet of him to have thought of flowers at all, but . . . camellias! Theo thanked her stars for the violets which she was already wearing, and dashed from the room to warn Madge, who promptly stole the chrysanthemums for the dinner-table, and pinned them in a conspicuous position. Hope, of course, was too gentle to refuse what had been meant so kindly, and as for Philippa, to judge by her ejaculations of delight, it would appear that nothing under the sun could have given her so much pleasure.

"'HURRAH! AT LAST! MR. HAMMOND HAS ACCEPTED MY STORY.'"—(*p.* 963.)

Then they drove away from the door in a couple of four-wheelers, two happy smiling girls on either back seat, faced by a hungry dress-coated man. The dinner was all that fancy had painted it. All sorts of delightful things to eat, disguised under French names, and looking so pretty that it seemed a sin to disturb the dishes. Music, lights, interesting people all around, at whom it was a pleasure to look, and who looked back in their turn, as if equally pleased by what they saw. Steve grew quite frisky in his enjoyment, Philippa and the Hermit became delightfully and unconsciously absorbed in their own conversation! The little party lingered over dessert, loth to leave so interesting a position, but the settees in the hall were presently discovered to afford an even better vantage-ground for observing their neighbours.

Steve came over and demanded a place upon the settee with his three younger sisters. "Neil is submitting the synopsis of his next book to Phil. You seem much jollier over here!" he said, innocently, and the girls watched Philippa's absorbed face in an ecstasy of admiration. "Doesn't she

do it well! Who would think, to look at her, that the very title is beyond her comprehension!" They turned aside to hide their smiles, and became once more absorbed in their old occupation. New and fascinating groups of people appeared at every moment, and it was no use deciding that you would have your next dress made exactly like this one, and making surreptitious sketches on the back of the ménu card, for it was no sooner lost to sight, than another appeared fifty times more distracting!

"I do feel a worm among them all!" sighed Madge; but when Steve considerately offered to take her home, she said, "Thank you, dear. I'm enjoying it dreadfully. I wouldn't go for *worlds*. Hope, there is a girl to the right who is staring at you with all her eyes. Pretend to look after this man, and you'll see her. There—by the lady in blue!"

Hope looked, exclaimed in surprise, and the next moment she and the strange girl had risen, and walked forward to meet each other in the middle of the hall.

"Miss Bennett, is it really you?"

"Hope Charrington—the idea of meeting you here! I've so often wanted to see you again. Sit down here and talk to me for a minute. Are those your sisters? They are not like you—not so pretty, but the one with the violets looks very smart. You are thin, but you are one of those horrid creatures who always looks nice. What do you think of me? Do I look worn? Brides always look wrecks, and I vowed I wouldn't, but I'm tired to death already. I've come up to buy my clothes. It's to be in February. You heard, of course?"

"Avice told me. I must congratulate you now. I suppose you are very happy?"

"*He* is!" laughed Truda, meaningly. "Quite daft about me. You met him, of course, down at the Shanty, and he liked you awfully much. We have often talked of you, and arranged to have you down, when we have a party to entertain!"

Hope smiled with stiff lips. He had liked her "awfully much," had he? So much that he had wished to have her as a visitor, when Truda was his wife. Oh! what a fool, fool, fool, she had been to imagine for a moment that he had really cared.

"You will live in the country, I suppose," she remarked, and again Truda laughed, and wagged her head.

"He thinks I will, and I am very meek and submissive *now*, but I'll have a town house before a year is over, you see if I don't! What is the use of all my lovely clothes in a poky little bit of a village? Would you like to see my dresses? I'll take you with me to the dressmaker's some day, if you like!"

"Thank you, but I am afraid I could not spare the time. It is very kind of you to ask me."

"Oh, not a bit! It would have amused me, and been a day off for Mamma. Still writing songs, and giving story-telling entertainments, are you? Oh, I heard all about it. I was bothered to death to find engagements for you." Truda lay back in her chair, and looked curiously into the fair, troubled face. "Seen anything of Ralph Merrilies lately?"

Hope's embarrassment was swallowed up in surprise at so casual a reference to a future husband. "No!" she said, emphatically, "not for nearly six months. I never meet him except at my aunt's house, and I go there very seldom. He does not call on us in our flat."

"I wonder why not? He was awfully smitten with you, and wasn't I furious about it! He had been quite attentive to me before you came, and then he had eyes for no one else. I believe I was quite jealous of you, dear!"

"You had no reason to be—you feel that now, don't you?" said Hope gently, and Truda gave a complacent little laugh.

"Oh, I don't mind now. He may care as much as he likes. Reggie is a good little soul. I'm quite satisfied with him."

"*Reggie!*"

"Reggie, of course—Charles Reginald Blake, who else should it be? Hope Charrington, you *don't* mean to tell me that you imagined——"

"Of course I did! It's your own fault. You told me—don't you remember—you told me yourself that you liked him, and warned me——"

For once Truda had the grace to blush, and look slightly discomfited.

"Oh well, of course, there was always *Someone!* I was rather smitten, but I could not go on caring for a man who had the bad taste to prefer another girl. And Reggie has been so faithful! He used to send me chocolates when I was at school at Brighton."

"He is a dear little man, so amiable and cheery. There will be quite a competition between you, as to who shall play off a trick first. I hope you will ask me down some day. You will be a merry couple," cried Hope, with such a heart-whole laugh as had not been heard from her for many a long day.

Miss Bennett regarded her curiously.

"How pleased you seem! Oh yes, I'll ask you." Her eyes twinkled. "Mind you send me an invitation in return," she cried.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ONE dark December morning Theo found a letter lying on her plate on the breakfast-table, not the long, white envelope addressed in her own writing, which her soul abhorred, but a business-looking epistle, stamped on which was the magic name of "The Casket Magazine." She gulped, tore open the envelope, and read the golden news. "I have read with much interest your original little story, and have pleasure in accepting it for the Magazine. . . ." "Your original little story. . . ." "Have pleasure in accepting it. . . ." Theo gulped again, and laughed with the tears in her eyes. Oh, how often she had dreamt of this moment, how she had longed for it, and sickened with dread lest it should never come. She turned a radiant face upon her sisters, and waved her letter in the air.

"Hurrah! At last! From Mr. Hammond. He has accepted my story, and calls it very original. *A story in 'The Casket'!* Girls, do you realise it? Do you realise how you are honoured by sitting at the same table with ME!" She laughed again, in tremulous fashion, and Madge bowed elaborately, coffee-cup in hand.

"Your health, my dear! I look towards you! You have done it this time . . . To be a contributor to 'The Casket' is like being hung on the line in the Academy. Shan't I brag about you at the Slade!"

"It is simply splendid, dear! I do hope they will put your name to it. It will be so disappointing if they don't!" said Philippa, the tactless. She was overflowing with sympathy with Theo in her success, and yet, poor dear! she must needs call attention to the one existing drawback; for "The Casket" was as conservative as it was high class, scorned to invite popularity by illustrations or artistic cover, and more often than not left a blank opposite the titles of stories and articles. It was at such moments as these that Theo felt that she could endure with resignation Philippa's speedy marriage and departure from the home circle. Only five minutes since she had heard the wonderful news, and already a little cloud came floating across the brightness of the sky. It was little use appearing in the best magazine of the day, if no one knew of it but yourself, and an admiring public remained in ignorance of your name?

"How *horrid* of you to suggest such a thing! You might let me enjoy myself when I can!" she cried irritably. "You are a perfect wet blanket, Philippa—always sitting on us, and depreciating what we do. It is too bad—spoiling my pleasure when I have waited so long."

"I! *I* spoil your pleasure! *I* depreciate you!" Philippa was fairly gasping with surprise and wounded feeling. "When I slave for you all day long—when I take everything off your hands, so that you may give your time to your work . . . when it is through me you are here at all. . . . You cruel, ungrateful girl! how can you have the heart to speak to me in such a way?"

"I'm sure I don't want you to slave for me! I am quite capable of doing my own mending, if you refer to that . . . . I should *like* to take more share in the housekeeping, but you are so jealous if anyone interferes."

"Jealous! Oh, oh! Jealous!" repeated Philippa dramatically. Her eyes were beginning to grow tearful: Theo's dark brows met in an ominous frown—there were all the signs of a row royal, when Hope came flying to the rescue.

"Girls, girls, *be quiet!*" she cried, banging her fist on the table in imperative fashion. "You shall *not* quarrel when we ought to be so happy! This is the best success we have had, and it would be disgraceful to spoil it by quarrelling like babies. You are both to blame, so no apologies are needed, but for goodness' sake smile and look pleasant!"

"I'm sure I am only too willing. I want to smile, if I am allowed!" said Theo gloomily.

"I'm sure I don't want to quarrel . . . perhaps I had better go away and leave you to yourselves, since I am such a wet blanket," sniffed Philippa into her pocket-handkerchief. Madge gave Hope a warning kick under the table, and began to chatter as unconcernedly as if nothing had occurred.

"You can always write "Contributor to 'The Casket'" beneath your name on the back of your MSS., Theo. No need to mention that the "etc." means the "Penny Penman!" And if you intimate to all whom it may concern that you write anonymously for "The Casket," you may get credit for half-a-dozen stories, instead of one. I wonder what they will pay you for it, and how soon it will appear. Won't the Hermit be impressed? He says it is the only magazine worth reading. Do knock at the door and tell him, Phil, as you go out for your shopping."

Wily Madge wished to offer a sop to each of the combatants, and had the satisfaction of seeing Philippa smile faintly, and the complacent expression return to Theo's face.

"I knew it was a splendid story when I sent it off!" said the author modestly. "Ten pounds at least, I should think, as it is such a first-class magazine. It took me less than four days, with all the correction and re-writing. Ten pounds a week . . . how much is that a year? If I earned five

hundred a year, it would make a difference in our exchequer, wouldn't it, Phil?"

The olive-branch was held out with a smile, Philippa checked herself on the verge of remarking that it would be difficult to sell a story a week, and peace was restored once more. The housekeeper went about her duties, and the author experienced that alternate elation and depression which follows artistic success. She had created something of real merit and power—that was a thrilling reflection, but quickly following came the dreary certainty that virtue had gone out of her, and she would never be able to do so well again. She hastened to her desk, hoping to disprove the dread by writing something better still; but, alas! her heroine sulked persistently, refused to be cajoled into conversation, and after being dragged through half-a-dozen pages, was promptly condemned to the flames. It appeared that even when one had begun to ascend the ladder, there was imminent danger of falling off!

Years later, when Theo had made a name for herself, as an author of power and originality, she used to look back on that morning, and smile at her own ignorance in having supposed for a moment that the battle was won. It was only begun, and it was a battle which had to be waged to the end. There could be no sitting down, and congratulating one's self on victory; no relaxation of care and study, for each fresh success brought its onus of responsibility, and made it more imperative for her to maintain her best. There were times when she thought wearily of Mr. Hammond's suggestion of "the bonnet shop," and realised that millinery would have been easier and more remunerative, but there was never an hour when she regretted her choice of a career. It seemed to her that no other work could be so absorbing, such a constant refuge from self.

Fortune had evidently made up her mind to smile upon the Charrington sisters this Christmastide, for Minnie Caldecott approved enthusiastically of the design for her concert programme, and the nursery frieze found a purchaser the first time it was exhibited. Madge had summoned courage to show the latter to "Pepper," on its completion, when he found a dozen faults, and made huge pencil-markings to illustrate his meaning, the while Madge writhed in agony, but finally he turned up trumps in the most delightful manner, by giving her an introduction to the firm with whom she had transacted her bargain. Judging from the experiences of the past few months she had a future before her in this particular branch of her art, and might, in time, make a comfortable income, but it was not in the least the work she had coveted. She burned to create great subjects on great canvases; to paint with strong, lurid brush, and lo! it appeared that it was her mission to design pretty leaflets and comic pictures for the nursery! It was a blow, but Madge had the good sense to realise that it is better to excel in humble work than to struggle painfully after the unattainable.

As for Hope, she sang and danced about the house with a sudden return to her old light spirits which puzzled two sisters and furnished valuable copy to a third. The short interview with Truda Bennett had made everything rose-coloured again, though in truth it was a trifle exasperating to remember Mrs. Loftus' invitation. Oh, to think that even now she might have been at The Shanty, with no secret promise to hinder her enjoyment of Ralph's society; that they might have been walking together along the country lanes; sitting side by side in the evenings!

"That tonic has given you quite a colour. I shall try it myself," said Philippa, looking up from her stocking basket to admire the sweet pink and white face at the opposite side of the table. "Mr. Neil was saying the other day, that so few town girls have any colour. I have lost mine with sitting so much in the house, but I might try what a bottle would do. It only costs a shilling at that wholesale chemist's. I do look such a faded old creature beside you, Hope, and after all I am only two years older!"

Hope laughed—a delightfully scornful, re-assuring laugh.

"Faded old creature, indeed when we were only remarking this week that you were looking handsomer than ever! And happier, too. That's because Barney will be home so soon, isn't it, dear?"

"Of course. What else should it be?" said Philippa, and to do her justice, she spoke in all sincerity. Theo's suggestion that she should consult the Hermit as to Barney's future, had been accepted with an unmoved face and put into immediate execution, and as a result of the conference a letter was even now on its way to Mr. Neil's younger brother in Canada, asking if it would be possible to receive the boy as a pupil on his large farm and ranch, and train him for future work on his own account. Philippa shed bitter tears at the thought of parting from her boy, but the Hermit insisted that it was the right thing to do, though much perturbed at the sight of her distress. "I seem fated to make you cry!" he said miserably. "Do you remember that first time—I shall never forget your face, all streaming with tears, and with such a miserable, helpless expression!"

"I must have looked very . . . ugly!" said

Philippa with a sob. She reflected that by the same course of reasoning she must look ugly now, and dried her eyes with remarkable promptness, while the Hermit sat in admiration of her fortitude.

If Barney were to be at home for a short time only, his sisters were determined to make that time as happy as possible, so that his recollections should carry with them no sting of reproach. In conclave together they agreed that the dear boy would be embarrassed and depressed, and that all means must be taken to convince him of their full and free forgiveness, and to put him at his ease once more. "I shall go to meet him!" Philippa said. "It will be less trying for him than having to see us all at once, and I am going to put up new curtains in his room — he hated those old moreen atrocities—and make it look bright and cheerful, as if it had been kept ready for him all the time. I'm going to be so busy this week—I don't know how I shall get through all I want to do, in the way of preparation."

'SEIZING EACH SISTER IN TURN, BARNEY SWUNG HER OFF HER FEET IN THE ARDOUR OF HIS GREETING.'—(*p.* 966.)

Alas for Philippa! her work during the next few days was to lie in bed, and burn and shiver with an attack of the prevalent influenza. Hope acted nurse, and Theo said blandly, "Don't worry, dear, I will look after the house. I know exactly what to do!" a statement which the invalid received with undisguised incredulity.

"She'll make an awful mess of it!" she sighed. But Theo had no intention of failing; she was a clever, capable girl, who could do most things well if she chose to give them her attention, and, as we know, she had a special reason for displaying her housekeeping powers. She put aside her writing for the time being, studied the cookery book, and the shop windows in the morning, and in the afternoon enveloped herself in a huge white apron and put into practice what she had learned.

All old housekeepers are apt to get into a rut and supply the same dishes over and over again, and Philippa was no exception to the rule, so it happened that the very novelty of Theo's ménus commanded success, and the invalid was constantly assured that she need not hurry out of bed, since all was going on swimmingly without her. If she shed tears at the intelligence, it was put down to the depression which was a part of the illness, and she was urged to take a cup of Theo's beef-tea. "Such excellent beef-tea!" or to take some of Theo's jelly—"Wonderfully good jelly!" by way of restorative. There could be no going to meet Barney now; the most she could do was to crawl out of bed an hour before he was expected and look on feebly at the final preparations. She searched for a dozen deficiencies, hoping, if the truth were told, to see tangible proofs of her absence, but all was orderly, dainty, and appropriate: the best china on the table, flowers in the vases, the fatted chickens roasting in the oven, and

Barney's favourite pudding all ready to be served, with its whipped cream ornamented in professional style with candied cherries and angelica. "You must sit still in that easy chair, poor darling; I'll carve!" said Theo, kindly, but Philippa felt much more inclined to snap than to be grateful for her consideration. She hated to be out of her usual place on this evening of all others, and to be obliged to play the part of spectator while Theo issued orders for the prodigal's reception.

"Madge, you must chatter as hard as you can! You are always bragging about your powers of conversation—now let us see what you can do. There must be no awkward pauses. It doesn't matter what you say, but say *something*. Hope, you had better run to the door and meet him first—no one could be afraid of *you*; and sit next to Steve at table, and stamp on his toes if he makes improving remarks. There will be plenty of time for that later on. We mustn't spoil the first evening. We won't let Barney linger over the greetings, but hurry him off to his own room to prepare for dinner. It shall be served the moment he comes back. It is so much less formidable to talk when one is eating!"

She had thought of everything; all the little niceties of consideration which Phil herself had planned, but had not yet put into words. She could think of no objection which would have been reasonable to advance, but made a feeble plea to be allowed to be first at the door, when Theo cried loudly, "My dear, with that face! You would frighten the poor boy into running away again!" and there was plainly no more to be said.

At six o'clock Barney's train was due at Waterloo before the half-hour it was calculated that he would reach home, and soon after the quarter Theo set the front door ajar, and the four sisters sat trembling with excitement, straining their ears for the first footstep. Steve and the Hermit were to bring the boy home from the station, and Philippa thought pitifully of his embarrassment, seated opposite the two solemn faces. This home-coming must be an awful ordeal, despite the letters of encouragement and forgiveness which had been sent to Madeira, and again to Southampton, and for her own part she dreaded to see the bright face clouded and ashamed. The moments passed and no one spoke; it was half-past six—twenty-five minutes to seven, and still Barney did not come. The invalid shivered, and drew her shawl more closely round her; Theo poked the fire, and swept the grate clear of ashes; Hope was in the act of leaving the room to peer over the banisters, when a sound from below startled all four sisters into instant attention. It was a sound with which they were all familiar—perhaps the last sound in the world which they expected to hear at that moment—a burst of merry, boyish laughter!

"Bar-ney!" gasped Phil, in an incredulous whisper, the other girls stood like so many statues, frozen into the position in which the sound had reached them. The leaping footsteps drew nearer and nearer, a voice called out "Avast there, my hearties!" and a big bronzed fellow threw open the door, and seizing each sister in turn, swung her off her feet in the ardour of his greeting. Madge's embrace was every whit as loving as that given to her sisters; for Barney had forgotten that he had left her in anger—forgotten her bitter words, as alas! he seemed to have forgotten his own folly and wrong-doing!

There was no need for Theo's elaborate precautions, the truant was as absolutely, transparently at his ease as if he had been out for half-an-hour's stroll, instead of a voyage across the world. It was his sisters who sat silent and embarrassed through the meal which followed, while he ate three helpings of chicken and pudding, and discoursed in picturesque fashion on a life on the ocean wave. Steve, who was always anxious to improve an occasion, had many questions to ask concerning the distant lands which had been visited, but though Barney could converse fluently enough on the iniquities of the sailors, or the idiosyncrasies of the passengers on whom he had waited, he was but a poor hand at useful information. What he approved was "ripping," what he disliked was "Tommy rot," but these descriptions were hardly satisfactory from a geographic or climatic point of view.

By nine o'clock Philippa was wan and spent, and went off to bed trying in vain to reason away the ache at her heart. It was all so different, so very different from what she had expected! She did not want to see her boy broken in spirit, but this unabashed assurance frightened her, as indicating a deeper carelessness and lack of moral fibre than she had suspected. It seemed incredible that Barney should show no sign of regret for the anxiety which he had caused, yet, on the other hand, what was the sense of writing that bygones were bygones and all offences forgiven and forgotten, and then lament because she was taken at her word? Philippa tossed restlessly on her pillow, and being weak and tired, cried steadily from the time she lay down until someone came into the room with her next dose of medicine, and turned up the gas over the mantelpiece.

"Don't, Hope!" she cried weakly, but it was

not Hope, but Barney himself, who raised her head on his arm, and held the glass to her lips.

"Now, then, old lady! I'm no end of a good nurse nowadays, so I thought I had better come and look after you myself. There was an old Johnny coming home from the Cape, in one of

Barney frowned and drew his hand away from the coverlet.

"So had I. I was beastly sick. It is all right though, Phil. I've brought back enough money to pay you back. I got some rattling good tips! That old Johnny I told you of . . ."

"'WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN CRYING ABOUT, PHILIPPA? ABOUT *ME*?'"

the deck cabins . . ." He stopped suddenly, and Philippa knew that he had noticed her tear-stained eyes. "He was very bad, and I had to dose him every hour," he concluded lamely, then bent down over her with curious gaze: "What have you been crying about? About *me*?"

"I'm—not well! It has upset me seeing you again, and thinking of all that has happened!"

"Was it that that made you ill to start with—my going off, I mean?"

It was a curious change of feeling to have taken place in a couple of hours, but Philippa actually found herself wishing that she could answer in the affirmative and casting about in her mind for some honest reply which would yet lay some burden of responsibility upon those careless shoulders.

"I have been laid up only a week, but I think I was run down by all the strain and suspense. We had a terrible fortnight . . ."

"Oh Barney, Barney, it was not the money! I never thought of the money!" cried Phil with such a wail of despair that brought the boy's eyes upon her with startled questioning. The two faces confronted each other, so like yet so unlike, and the boy flushed darkly through all his tan.

"Well, you needn't have worried about—*that*, either! I told you I would remember. I gave my promise, and I—kept it, Phil! There were lots of things I wanted to do. It was awfully dull not being able to go about with the other fellows, but I kept my word. And I wanted to spend that money too! There was the cutest little monkey you ever saw, trained to do all sorts of tricks. It was jolly hard lines not being able to bring it home as a present to you girls, but I thought under the circumstances it might be bad form!"

"Oh Barney, Barney!" cried Philippa, laughing uncontrollably even as the tears rolled down her cheeks. It was such Balm in Gilead to know

that the promise had been kept—it was so ridiculously, inimitably like Barney that he should mix up monkeys with the story of his repentance! "I'm so very, very thankful for everything," she whispered; "for the things you didn't do, and—the monkey that didn't come. Kiss me, Barney! I shall get well quickly now that you are back."

Barney did as he was asked, not once, but many times over, and kept his big fingers clasped closely round hers while he asked anxiously:

"You won't want to send me back to an office, will you, Phil? The Hermit has been telling me about his brother in Canada. That's the sort of thing I should like, if it could be arranged. It will be beastly leaving home again. I never knew it was such a thundering nice place until I left this time. But it is my only chance. I should never do any good in the City. You will let me go, won't you, Phil?"

"Yes, Barney," said Philippa, sadly. "It is the hardest thing you could ask me, but if it is for your good I must not think of myself. You shall go, dear, as soon as an opening is found, and we will give you as complete an outfit as can be bought, but after that we can do no more. You will have to stand by yourself, and fight your own battles. There will be no home open if you run away from your work, and no stupid old sister to spoil you and give you a fresh start!"

The smile with which Barney regarded her was at once charming and pathetic—so full of warm-hearted affection, so radiantly complacent and assured.

"Canada is not far off—it would be as good as being in England, for it is under the old flag, and the people are so jolly loyal and brave. I could come back every two or three years, and when I get a home of my own you will have to come out and visit me. Don't you worry, old girl, I'll get on like a house on fire, and I promise you to keep out of mischief—there will be no chance of getting into it, for one thing, away out in the wilds!"

"Oh, Barney, Barney, don't be so sure! There will be difficulties and temptations wherever you go, and you must be prepared to meet them. Don't be content to promise *me*, dear!—Promise yourself—the strong, good man you were meant to be. Promise God, Barney, and ask Him to help you to stand fast!"

It was not Philippa's habit to preach, and the fact gave additional weight to her solemn words. Barney looked awed and impressed, and thoroughly uncomfortable into the bargain. "All right, Phil, —I'll remember!" he said softly; but the next moment he discovered that she looked tired, and hurried away. Philippa heard him go into his own room, and presently the sound of his voice reached her ears, raised in happy strains—

> "Jack's the boy, when girls are sad,
> To kiss their tears away. . . ."

He had been serious for five minutes on end, and the strain was evidently too much for his constitution; but Philippa lay awake far into the night, talking to God about her boy, asking His help where she had failed. It was the truest of all comforts to feel that the far-off country was still near to Him.

Fortunately for all concerned, the letter from the Hermit's brother proved in every respect satisfactory, for the Loftus family washed their hands of Barney, going out of their way to refuse help even before it was asked. The mannikin would, no doubt, have acted differently had he been permitted, but his wife told him sternly that he could not allow *all* his friends to be victimised by that dreadful boy, when he said "Yes, my dear, yes! No, my dear, no!" and collapsed, as his custom was. The Charringtons were hardly disappointed, for they had learned long ago that—except where Hope was concerned—it was useless to expect sympathy from Aunt Loftus. Avice's affection for Hope made her a welcome guest, and she was frequently asked to fill a vacant place at a dinner table, or presented with a ticket for an afternoon concert which she would not otherwise have been able to afford. It was at such a concert that Hope's next meeting with Ralph Merrilies took place, and through all her embarrassment she noticed the glance exchanged between him and Avice as he seated himself in the vacant stall by her side. There was no surprise in her cousin's languid eyes, but something very, very like triumph at the completion of a well-laid scheme. Could it be possible that the seat had been designedly reserved?

As we all know, well-bred people never dream of whispering or talking at classical concerts, and Hope's devotion to her programme was so continual and absorbing, that her next-door neighbour could study her profile at his ease, and wonder if there was another girl in the world who had such long eyelashes and such a sweet mouth. The interval seemed a long time in coming, but it came at last, and then Avice gave Ralph another eloquent glance and carried off her mother to speak to some friends at the other side of the hall. The occupants of stalls to right and left were also moving about and chattering together, and to the two who were left seated there was a sense of solitude in the midst of a crowd.

"Wasn't it beautiful?" asked Hope, still studying her programme. "Very!" replied Ralph, but they were not referring to the same subject. He rested his arm on the back of the seat, and said softly—

"Never mind that programme now. Talk to me! I haven't seen you for months. Mrs. Loftus told me that you refused her invitation to The Shanty. I had been hoping to meet you there."

"And I was sorry not to go, but we were in trouble at the time, and I felt I ought to stay at home. Did you have a good time?"

"Fairly so. It suffered from contrast. It was amusing to meet Miss Bennett in her new *rôle*."

"I met her a few weeks ago at the Carlton."

"So she told me." There was a meaning expression in his voice which made the blood rush into Hope's face. He bent nearer to her, his eyes fixed earnestly on hers. "What made you think that? What made you imagine for a moment that she could be engaged to me?"

"I can't tell you," replied Hope, truthfully enough. She stared down at the programme and became intently occupied in pleating its cover between her fingers. "I knew it was some one whom I had met at The Shanty, and I took for granted that it was you."

"You can't truthfully tell me that you thought I was in love with her last year?"

"N-no."

"Did it ever strike you that I was in love with some one else?" The elbow moved its position and encroached on the corner of her own chair. "Hope, I want you to answer a question. Did you refuse to let me call upon you in town because you knew I loved you, and thought it was impossible to care for me in return?"

The grey eyes were lifted at that with an air of startled disclaimer.

"Oh no, no! *Quite* the contrary!" cried Hope, eagerly. The next moment confusion seized her as she recognised the inference, but the words were spoken beyond recall, and Ralph's glowing face showed that he was not likely to forget them.

"You darling! Hope, do you mean it? Have we been misunderstanding each other all this time?" He stretched his hand towards hers, then hurriedly drew it back as an old lady put up her *pince-nez* to regard him from afar. "Hang these people! What a nuisance they are. I'll tell you a secret, Hope. I fell in love with you that very first evening while you were singing your little song, and I've been uncommonly miserable ever since. Well?"

"Well—what?"

"'DID YOU REFUSE TO LET ME CALL UPON YOU BECAUSE YOU SAW I LOVED YOU?'"

"One expects some response to a statement like that."

Hope gave a soft, contented laugh.

"I—liked you too, and I have been *wretched!* What made you come here to-day?"

"Truda told me about your interview, and volunteered the intelligence that you seemed relieved to discover that I was not the happy man. She spoke to Avice too, I imagine, for I was asked to join you this afternoon in a very marked manner."

So Truda had repented her jealous exaction, and had tried to undo the mischief which it had wrought. That was generous of her, but Hope blushed with a discomfited air as she said:—

"I thought I pretended so beautifully! I thought no one could guess. . . There is something else I want to explain. That evening last winter when you wanted to see me home—it was not my fault that I disappeared before you came back. Mrs. Welsby asked me to take charge of a little girl, and sent me off in a cab."

"Humph!" exclaimed Mrs. Welsby's brother, drily. "What a comfort it would be if people would attend to their own business in this world! And were you sorry, Hope? Were you disappointed?"

"I cried!" said Hope, simply, and once again Ralph Merrilies looked round at the audience, and breathed a wish that they were at any other part of the world than just that inhabited by Hope and himself.

At the conclusion of the interval Avice came back to her seat, and looking shyly around, found the answer to her question in two flushed, radiant faces.

"I'm so glad, Hope!" she whispered, pressing her cousin's hand beneath the shelter of that useful programme. "It is just what I wanted. I helped you a little, didn't I? I asked him on purpose!"

"I shall love you for it all my life!" said Hope, shyly. "So shall I," said Ralph, "but why didn't you do it sooner?"

Two hours later Hope ascended the stairs leading to the little flat, having dismissed an unwilling lover who had been anxious to introduce himself to his future sisters-in-law, and fix the date of his wedding without a moment's delay. She tried hard to control her features as she entered the dining-room, and to look less ridiculously happy, but it was of no avail: the girls gaped at her in astonishment as she stood blushing and smiling before them, and Madge cried severely:

"What is the matter? You look mighty pleased with yourself, my dear! What mischief have *you* been up to this afternoon?"

"Please," said Hope, humbly, "I've been getting engaged!" The scene which followed approached delirium in its excitement.

"And to think that I did not even know his name," Philippa exclaimed, when a hundred questions had been asked and answered, and Hope had been kissed and hugged to her heart's content. "You *were* quiet about it! How did you manage to get along without some one to comfort you, all these long months?"

"Theo knew!" said Hope, and at that a little frown showed itself on Philippa's forehead. It was a blow to her vanity to find that another had been chosen before herself, and though she made no comment, it filled her with a yearning for a closer sympathy and appreciation than she received in the home circle.

"Sometimes I feel as if I had come to the end of my work," she said wistfully to the Hermit when he came upstairs during the evening to congratulate the bride-elect. "When Barney goes abroad and Hope marries, we shall be a very small family, and Theo is so clever at housekeeping. When I was ill they got on quite well without me. It seems as if the time had come when I am not needed. It makes me feel quite sad!"

"You mustn't feel that. Er—er—*fresh* duties may arise!" stammered the Hermit in consolation.

Madge looked at them across the room and dropped her sagacious chin.

"At this rate," she said to herself, "at this precipitate rate they will be finding out what they want in the course of the next three or four years!"

Two Celebrated Teachers of Singing.

Madame Blanche Marchesi and Miss Eugenie Joachim, whose methods differ so widely, place their unrivalled experience at the service of the readers of "The Girl's Realm."

BY FRANCES BRUNKER.

MADAME BLANCHE MARCHESI.

THERE is scarcely any branch of a girl's education that has so effectually altered within the last few years as that of singing. Time was when a girl on leaving school, if she possessed a pretty voice and the inclination to cultivate it, was given a dozen or two lessons with some fashionable teacher. This more or less superficial instruction was considered quite enough to transform any young lady into a first-rate amateur performer, who would be always ready to oblige when called upon with some easy pleasing ballad. But, oh! the degrees of imperfection that were displayed on these occasions. To-day this is absolutely changed, for, as it is with every other accomplishment, the standard of amateur singing is now so high that a girl who sings at all must take up the study with all her heart. Fortunately, however, enthusiasm is a characteristic of the modern girl, who carries out thoroughly whatever she undertakes. I am sure that to her, and, indeed, to every lover of music, the following remarks from the two ladies who are unquestionably the best teachers in England for singing in every branch will be interesting.

No one has a better right to lay down the law than Miss Eugenie Joachim, who only gave up her career as a singer when a long and serious illness proved disastrous to her voice. It was when Miss Joachim first came to England, and made her home with her only brother, that her vocation as a teacher declared itself. But she did not begin on the old lines of teaching singing; she had soon originated a complete system of her own, with the success that is well known.

Madame Blanche Marchesi, the gifted daughter of a gifted mother, has a world-wide reputation as a singer; she has brought to London all the traditions of the celebrated "Marchesi School" in Paris. If there are a

MADAME BLANCHE MARCHESI IN THE CHARACTER OF MARIA IN "A BASSO PORTO."

few points on which Miss Joachim and Madame Blanche Marchesi differ in their teaching, they most certainly meet on the common ground of doing all within their power for the advantage of their pupils; each succeeds in making the lessons a real enjoyment to the girls who study with her.

Madame Blanche Marchesi was occupied with other things than theories and methods for teaching singing when I went to see her the other day. She was decorating the room for her little boy's party, Madame explained, but it was all but finished, and she would be only too pleased to tell me all I wanted.

"The first, the most vital thing of all for any singer," she declared with emphasis, in answer to my question, 'what is your first lesson to a pupil?' "is the correct production of the voice. A singer comes to me, but whether she has studied one or twenty years it is the same—I begin at the very beginning, and teach her to produce her voice in the proper way. Ah, what ruin is effected by allowing a girl to sing songs before her voice is *posé*. There are a few happy creatures who have that priceless gift, a voice placed by nature, but they are very rare, and are chiefly found amongst light sopranos, who, like a bird, sing upwards. But to them also I say work, work hard and learn the proper method, so that when faults creep in—and they will—the singer may know how to guard against bad habits. There is no standstill in art; either you progress or retrogress, and without system there is little doubt which it will be."

I asked Madame Marchesi how much practice she required from her pupils when they began with her. She was horrified by my question.

"How much," she exclaimed, "why, not one single second's, unless I am with them. My pupils never sing alone at all till they arrive at a certain stage, then I allow a few minutes' practice by themselves, and if I find the voice continues well, I let it increase by slow degrees to half-an-hour daily, but never more than that. Mental work of course is different, and a pupil can devote hours and hours to studying all the details of a difficult work, and committing it to memory. Choral societies and sight-reading classes are ruination to a voice."

"Do you give your lessons privately or in class?" I asked.

"At the commencement always privately," she replied. "A pupil comes to me—she is shy, awkward, and thinks no one was ever so bad as she. I encourage her to be present at the lesson of one more advanced than she, and thus she gets the advantage of her instruction. This always affords immense interest to the beginner, who, when she in her turn has reached the advanced stage, allows others to come in while she is being taught. I find this plan creates great sympathy amongst my girls, and is of much advantage in many ways. They have the right, however, to do exactly as they like about it."

"I wonder what you would do with a very stupid pupil," I remarked, for Madame Marchesi is so full of talent herself that it seems that denseness in another would be beyond her comprehension, "Well, I have never found any one so stupid that they could not understand my method," she replied. "Some, of course, take a longer time than others. Vanity, and an anti-musical feeling are far more difficult to overcome. I find the chief fault with English girls is a want of rhythm. In this respect the Irish are infinitely better."

Just lately several of Madame Marchesi's pupils have appeared with success on the concert platform; and they are testimonies to the perfection of her training. One of them, Miss Gertrude Calvert, who was engaged for the whole of the Patti tour both in 1900 and 1901, has a remarkable contralto voice. Messrs. Harrison also telegraphed for another pupil, Miss Edith Wehner, to fill the place of Madame Patti, who was suddenly taken ill at Sheffield. Miss Norah Newport is another for whom Madame Marchesi prophesies good things. Her voice is light soprano, and she has undoubted talent for opera *bouffe*. Circumstances in her case make the stage impossible, and she now devotes herself to oratorio and concert work. Mark Twain's daughter, Clara Clemens, has also been studying over here for two years, and she is now returning to America thoroughly prepared to take up concert work. Miss Emmy Tatham, who is excellent in opera and oratorio, and Miss Beatrice Spencer, a charming light soprano, were amongst those Madame Marchesi talked about; she was enthusiastic over a new contralto who had been to her the week before. "A second Albani," she assured me; "never, never have I come across a voice of such promise. With work there is nothing it will not accomplish."

Considering the claims of Madame Marchesi's own concert work, it is wonderful that she finds so much time for teaching, but her ardour carries her through an immense amount of work. Her singing is acknowledged to be the perfection of art, and she is a marvellous exponent of what she teaches. As an artist she excels in intense dramatic feeling, in intellectual interpretation, and in extreme discrimination. It is not too much to say that every time she sings in public she gives a lesson that is invaluable to every student of singing.

MISS EUGENIE JOACHIM always talks about

MISS JOACHIM WHEN SHE WAS SINGING IN VIENNA.

MISS JOACHIM AS SHE APPEARS TO-DAY.

MISS JOACHIM IN THE NATIONAL DRESS OF HUNGARY.

teaching as though it were a veritable joy to her. Indeed, she has been heard to declare that holidays are her greatest trial, and that she is not really happy unless every moment of her time is taken up with lessons. A teacher is, except in a few cases, born, not made, which is certainly true in the case of Miss Joachim. The surroundings of her early life have eminently fitted her for the path she has struck out for herself. It is little wonder that she is reckoned an infallible authority on the traditions of German music. Miss Joachim's parents were both musical, and her home in Vienna was once the resort of every musician of note. In addition to this, she is the niece of Dr. Joachim, the greatest violinist of the age.

Miss Joachim commenced her studies under the happiest auspices. She studied singing with Madame Mathilde Marchesi, whom she holds in most affectionate remembrance. The celebrated Stockhausen was among her instructors, and with him she studied Schubert and Schumann. She had the inestimable advantage of being coached in all his songs by Brahms himself, and Rubinstein was always ready to accompany the young singer in her interpretation of his compositions.

When Miss Joachim settled down in London she began by teaching German. Many of our most accomplished singers, to quote only a few—Madame Lilian Blauvelt, Madame Ella Russell, Miss Esther Palliser. Miss Ada Crossley, Signorina Ravogli, Mrs. Helen Trust, Miss

Photo. H. Walter Barnett, Hyde Park Corner.

MISS CLARA CLEMENS, DAUGHTER OF MARK TWAIN, WHOM MADAME MARCHESI LOOKS UPON AS ONE OF HER MOST PROMISING PUPILS.

Miss Clemens has returned to America to take up concert work there.

Grainger Kerr, Mr. Gregory Hast, Mr. Whiteney Stockridge, Mr. Denham Price, and many others—went to her for a final polish in some difficult German work. Before long, however, a spirit of thoroughness decided Miss Joachim to take pupils from the very first stage. She did so, and became so successful in this branch of teaching that she was appointed Professor at the Guildhall School of Music, where her pupil, Miss Maud Langton, took the Taylor Gold Medal for best student this year. She has a marvellous faculty of getting the very best from her pupils; not only does she teach them how to sing, but she takes care that they thoroughly understand the meaning of what they sing. She allows nothing that is in the least degree a parrot-like interpretation.

I asked Miss Joachim what plan she followed with the numerous girls who pass through her hands. "It is almost impossible to teach any two pupils alike," she told me. "The first thing to consider is the individual character of each girl, and I find it really necessary to take every one on a different system. The one thing of importance is that a perfect sympathy should exist between teacher and pupil. One must never expect too much from a beginner, and I find that nothing is so great an encouragement as praise, of course judiciously applied, and at a proper moment. The length of time for practice must depend entirely on the mental and the physical capacity, but I should *never* continue with a girl who would not work at all. It would be altogether waste of my time and hers. My great aim is to train my pupils to be original, and not to follow one another in a flock."

"You make a special point of diction, do you not?" I asked.

"Yes, I do," she replied. "In a song the words and the music must go hand in hand, and no singer can properly interpret a work unless she or he is thoroughly acquainted with the text. Many students bring a French or German song to me, and sing it through note perfect, but when I ask them to tell me the meaning of the words they are quite at sea. I completely disapprove of translations; for, with the change of language, either the phrasing must be altered, or the words be accentuated wrongly. I am glad to tell you that Mr. Max Hecht has given to the Guildhall School of Music 300 guineas to establish an annual prize for singing in the original language German classical music, ranging from Bach to Brahms."

I have been present at some of Miss Joachim's lessons, and her attention to the very smallest detail of her work is really wonderful. She will go over a passage times without number until the pupil achieves it to her satisfaction, and she will even resort to most original means to illustrate her meaning. On one occasion, when the characteristic nature of Hungarian music proved utterly beyond the comprehension of a clever singer, who delivered one of Brahms' "Zigeuner Lieder" with a delicacy and restraint that completely deprived it of any tone colour whatever, Miss Joachim, after appealing in vain for more *abandon*, more life, and *verve*, at last the better to convey to her pupil the true spirit of the song, danced the Czardas with all the gaiety of a real Hungarian—a lesson that proved entirely effectual.

"Do you make a settled rule as to the music a pupil must study?" I asked her, and Miss Joachim was most decided on this point.

"All teachers must be absolutely catholic with regard to the music they teach," she replied. "But need I say that all of its kind must be good to cultivate the taste? At the beginning I give my pupils classical music only, and I find Handel's slow Arias invaluable as studies, for they combine the expression of the words with the giving of the voice. Italian music is really good for this purpose, French music least of all. When a pupil reaches a certain proficiency I select songs to suit her own particular style. Nothing is worse than to force a singer to uncongenial work; even with professionals the result obtained is infinitely less good than with that which is adopted spontaneously. It is strange, but true, however, that I have found girls devoted to classical music, and going to every possible classical concert, when their own special talent lay in singing light and humorous modern songs. But fortunately even for these there is no lack of good music; a song need not be of inferior quality because it is of light and merry character. Look at Liza Lehmann's newest work, 'The Daisy Chain,' Alicia Needham's 'Bairn Ballads,' and many others that are excellent. Above all things, if a pupil is not a good linguist—and some, alas! are not—let her sing in English, after studying in Italian. Do I believe in frequent lessons? Yes, certainly at the first it is quite necessary to have no long intervals between each lesson, but I always make my pupils independent of me, that is, able to study by themselves as soon as possible. It is the teacher's duty to make students concentrate their thoughts on what is taught from the very first, then they are sure to progress quickly. I generally find that students who play the violin are quicker and more receptive than those who have not taken up the instrument."

CONSULTING THE CLOCK.

By WINIFRED FENN.

Illustrated by HILDA COWHAM.

"I NEVER was in such an awkward position in all my life before," said the kitchen cat, Peter.

"What's the matter with it?" said the Clock, looking critically at him, as he lay curled up on a hassock under the kitchen table. "It seems to me that you look particularly comfortable."

"Don't be foolish," replied Peter, getting up and stretching himself, his arched back nearly touching the table underneath. "I don't mean just at this precise moment——"

"Twelve and a-half minutes to four," interrupted the Clock.

"But at this stage of my existence, if you know what that means," continued Peter, with a yawn; "and I have made up my mind to something important. Do you understand?—I'm *going!*"

"Is that all?" said the Clock, peevishly. "I don't call that anything important. Why, I'm always going."

"Why do you stop, then?" asked Peter, with great indignation.

"Well, you see, dear Peter," said the Clock, a little sadly, "I am not so young as I used to be, and I do get so run down at times, and then I *have* to stop."

"Well, I'm run down, too,"

said Peter. "Nobody has a kind word for me nowadays, not even the Cook."

"Oh, I like the Cook," said the Clock. "She always takes a lot of notice of me; she says she couldn't get on a bit without me. Is it because of her that you mean to leave?"

"Yes, partly," said Peter; "at least, chiefly," he added, as he thought of his great grievance.

"What has she done?" asked the Clock. "Starved you?"

"Oh, no," said Peter, "it isn't that," and he looked at the pretty gold-rimmed saucer which was his special property, and which was each

"'OF AN EVENING, WHEN COOK SITS DOWN TO NEEDLEWORK SHE IGNORES THE FACT THAT I AM SITTING ON THIS HASSOCK.'"

morning filled to the brim with beautiful warm milk. "I can't say I'm starved, but, all the same, the Cook does not treat me at all well."

"Well, what is it?" said the Clock, impatiently. "You've been three minutes already; why don't you come to the point?"

"Well, if you'd believe it," said Peter, with an indignant sweep of his tail, "of an evening, when she sits down to her needlework she ignores the fact that I am sitting on this hassock—my own hassock, I would have you know; a Christmas present—and puts her feet on *me*, just as if I were the top of the hassock!"

"Monstrous!" said the Clock, sympathetically. "Monstrous! I should strike!"

"You're always striking," grumbled Peter; "that doesn't do any good."

"I don't know so much about that," said the other. "I've known it more than once remind people of their duty, and it certainly breaks the monotony of ticking."

"That reminds me," said Peter, licking his lips, "of a clock I once knew. When it wanted to strike it opened a little door in front and let out a sweet little bird which cried 'Cuckoo! Cuckoo!'"

"Didn't you kill it?" said the Clock, eagerly.

"Yes," said Peter, mournfully; "that was why I left, and it wasn't worth it. It turned out to be only a stuffed one."

"The idea!" said the Clock. "I shouldn't like a stuffed bird inside me!"

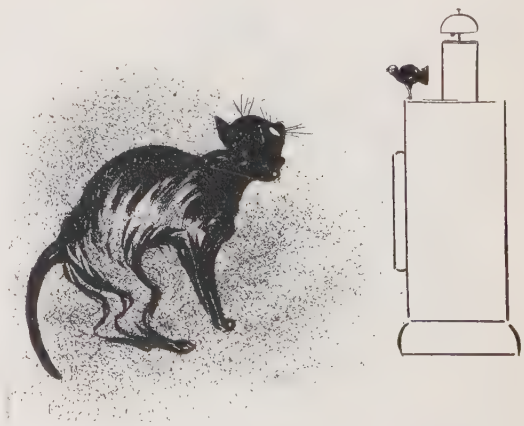
"Depends what it was stuffed with," said Peter. "I once tasted a stuffed lark, and—oh, my whiskers!—wasn't it lovely! But I am forgetting all about my move. I want to ask your advice."

"Ask away, then," said the Clock. "I'll give you five minutes."

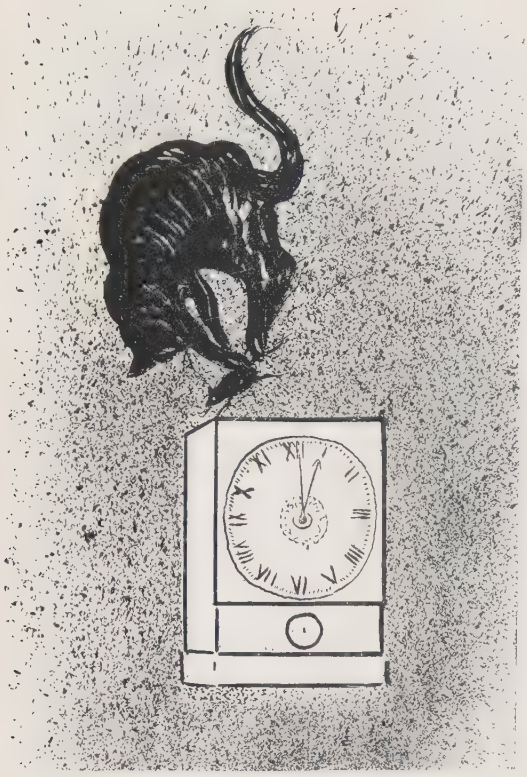
"It's like this," said Peter; "I have heard of a lovely place, three doors off from here, where they haven't got a cat at all, so of course they would be delighted to have me; and what do you think they keep?—canaries; you know, fat little yellow things in cages. I want to move to-night, but the difficulty is how to get there. It is really very awkward. What would you do?"

"I should walk if I were you," said the Clock, gravely. "You've got four legs. Isn't that enough? Cook gets about on only two."

"Ah," said Peter, "but you forget, there is my luggage. If it were only a matter of legs I should do well enough. But what about my hassock and my beautiful gold-rimmed saucer?"



"'IT LET OUT A SWEET LITTLE BIRD WHICH CRIED "CUCKOO." . . IT TURNED OUT TO BE ONLY A STUFFED ONE.'"



"'THE MOUSE RAN DOWN—' 'I REMEMBER,' SAID PETER, 'I ATE IT.'"

"Leave them behind," suggested the Clock.

"I couldn't think of it," said Peter, firmly, giving an affectionate lick round the saucer and again ensconcing himself on the hassock. "It is absolutely impossible. I should catch my death of cold without my hassock. You have no idea what a number of draughts there are all about the floor."

"Ah, that's the disadvantage of being young," said the Clock. "When you are as old as I am you will be put on the shelf, too. No draughts up here!"

"Any mice?" said Peter.

"No," said the Clock, "not often. There was one once, but I struck——"

"As usual," murmured Peter.

"And the mouse ran down—Hick——"

"I remember," said Peter. "I ate it," and he gave a smack of his lips which sounded like "*Dock!*"

"Ah, to be sure," said the Clock. "Just turned one it was, and you had it for lunch. I remember. Well, take the hassock and leave the saucer behind."

"I thought of that," said Peter; "but that doesn't do away with the difficulty. How am I to move the hassock?"

"Wait a moment!" said the Clock. "I've found the key!"

"I didn't know you had lost it," said Peter.

"I don't mean my key," cried the Clock; "that's all right—but the key to your problem."

"Yes, what is it?" said Peter, excitedly.

"I have always found it answer when I want to win special attention from the Cook."

"Yes," said Peter, "you——"

"Stop!" said the Clock, with conviction; "just stop. You try it."

"I will," said Peter. "That's a splendid idea of yours. I knew you would help me."

"Delighted," said the Clock; "but now you must excuse me. I have been talking so long, I must really strike——"

"Of course I'll excuse you," said Peter. "You've struck the right idea and advised me to stop, so now you are welcome to strike anything you like."

"One—two—three—four—five."

"Yes, yes," murmured Peter, turning round for another nap, "you can go on striking. I don't mind now. I stop for you, but you needn't stop for me."

MISS MAY HEZLET.

HOW THE GIRL CHAMPION PLAYS GOLF

Illustrated by Photographs specially taken for "The Girl's Realm," by Miss Woods, of Portrush.

THE "GRIP" OF MISS HEZLET.

May Hezlet, the Golf Champion of England, speaks a few words of advice to Girl Golfers.

HAVING been asked by the Editor of THE GIRL'S REALM to write a few hints to girl golfers, I will try in this article to help you to the best of my ability, and to point out to you some of the things which have helped me in my own play. All girls can play golf well if only they set about it in the right way, and the younger they begin the better it is for their style.

When girls are very young they acquire naturally a full and easy swing without thinking about it, and without effort, and this is the prettiest and best style there is. But when they are older and their muscles are not so pliable it is better to begin with a half-swing and gradually to work up to the full. The best plan is to watch closely some really good amateurs or professionals playing, and to copy their swings as much as possible, but with certain modifications which may suit your own style better. Above all swing naturally. There is nothing so ugly as the forced, laboured style of a player who has been taught altogether on a system, or by reading books of instruction. Books are very good, and personally I have learnt a great deal from them, but half an hour's practice at swinging will do your play more good than a couple of hours' poring over books and trying to play by rule.

"Keep your eye on the ball" is the chief rule you need remember, and next in importance comes "Slow back." But after thinking of these two maxims, the rest of the stroke should be done as naturally as possible. "Slow back" does not mean, as some people think, that the club is to be lifted up as if it were a ton weight, but only that in comparison the upward swing must be slower than the downward. Watching professionals play, the beginner will see hardly any difference between the upward and downward swings, and will stand aghast at the quickness with which they hit. But in reality the upward swing is always a little slower than the downward, as it gives more certainty to the stroke being a well-hit one.

Brassie and cleek shots are simply modifications of the drive, and should be practised separately as much as possible, as on most ladies' courses there are very few opportunities for long shots through the green. Iron shots vary from a full iron shot, which carries nearly as far as a cleek, but with not so much run on the ball, down to the shortest iron approach. Three-quarter iron shots are about the hardest to play well, and they can be hit in two ways, either by taking a divot or by hitting the ball clean. In the former case it will be found of assistance to hold the club rather short, and to stand well over the ball, as by this means more power over the club can be obtained.

Approaches may be divided into two classes. Mashie approaches, which loft the ball, well putting a cut on which stops it from rolling, and running iron approaches, which are very deadly, but can only be used on large unguarded greens. The mashie approach is much the prettier to watch; none but golfers can appreciate the delight which is felt when the ball rises well into the air, and drops down a few feet from the hole, hardly rolling at all. A

very short quick swing is best for these shots, and above all the eye must be kept on the ball. It is sometimes very hard not to look at the hole instead of the ball, and one does it without thinking, as the eye turns instinctively to the point at which one is aiming, but failure is always the certain result, and the feeling must therefore be combated and conquered. The running approach can only be used on large unguarded greens, while the mashie approach can be used on any kind of links. But the former is sometimes a very deadly form of play. To draw the club slightly across the ball is occasionally a good plan to put cut on these approaches, as it is rather hard to stop them on fast greens in the right place.

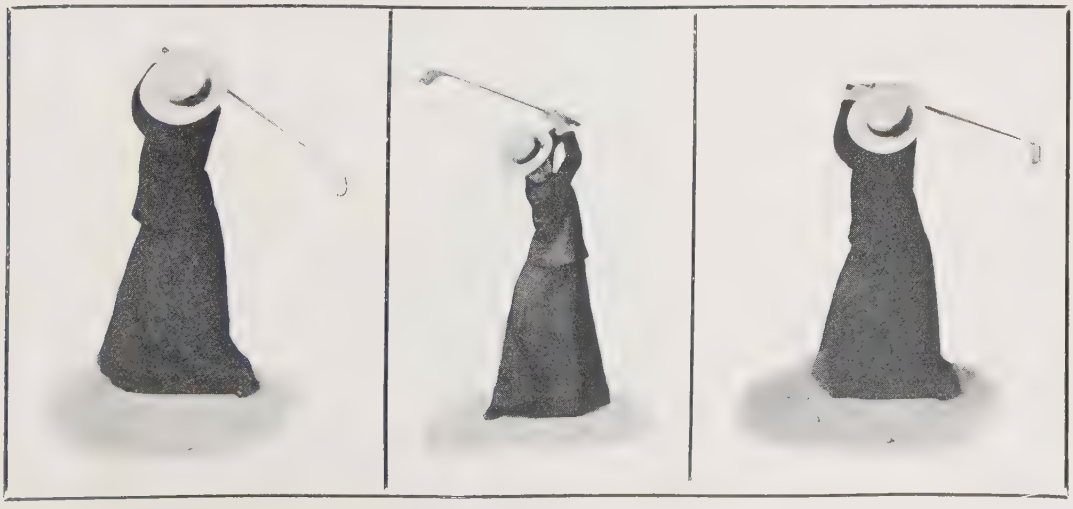
ADDRESSING THE BALL.

Putting, as has been truly said, is an "inspiration." In nine cases out of ten, the fault is that the ball is not hit hard enough, but only goes about half-way to the hole.

"Never up, never in," is a maxim that should be recalled on the putting green. The player who does so, and, in addition keeps her eye on the ball in the short putts, will prove, as a rule, a very useful putter.

Nothing improves one's play more than going over a long course with men, and as at nearly all the big clubs now, ladies are allowed to play over the long links during the winter months, every advantage of this should be taken. It gives one an altogether freer style of hitting, and lengthens out one's drive tremendously, as ladies' courses are naturally rather cramping to long players. It is not so much the shortness of the holes on the ladies' courses that cramp one's play, but as a rule straightness is such an absolute necessity that it is rather hard to hit out freely when one knows that the slightest deviation to either side of the links will probably land the ball in some dreadful bunker.

As regards the all-important point to the girlish mind: the clothes that should be worn for golf, nothing looks nicer than a short serge skirt, with a pretty flannel or cotton blouse,



FULL SWING OF DRIVE. FOLLOW THROUGH OF DRIVE. FULL CLEEK SHOT.

THREE-QUARTER IRON SHOT.

SHORT APPROACH SHOT.

a white sailor hat (with the club colours round it or a plain black band), and a pair of fairly substantial boots.

In wet weather a red coat can be worn and a tam o' shanter instead of the hat. One costume I saw on the links this year looked extremely well. It was a fine sunny day, and the golfer wore a red homespun skirt, with a white muslin blouse, and a very smart white tam o' shanter. It looked cool and workmanlike.

Always take a beating in the same spirit you would a victory, and you will be respected and liked wherever you go. Golf is a game which tries the temper almost more than any other game I know, but one can never become a really good golfer till one has learnt to take the bad luck with the good, and to bear all the little trials and vicissitudes of the game with a perfectly calm mind.

FOLLOW THROUGH OF IRON SHOT.

Somebody has said, "Learn to play golf and to wait." It is a capital rendering of the famous words applied to golf. The girl-golfer who can wait, like the girl who can lose gracefully, will be always a welcome figure on the links. The player who is considerate at golf, as at all other games, will find that she never loses by her consideration. She will be voted a good "sportsman" by all, and she will be constantly invited to go round when others, whose method of play is more brilliant than her own, are left unasked, because their game has been proved to be a selfish one,

THE GIRL CHAMPION PUTTING.

CAREERS FOR GIRLS—PHOTOGRAPHY.

BY JESSIE TRIMBLE.

THE majority of men who honestly disapprove of women in business do so, it has seemed to me, on the ground of woman's physical unfitness for a strenuous life. The average man says, "You simply are not strong enough to compete with us."

Now most thoughtful women recognize that in this particular men have truth on their side. But once forced into the competition, and started in professions such as medicine, teaching, and journalism, it is not easy to retrace one's steps in the endeavour to find an occupation less taxing. I think men usually misjudge us in this matter of working. We would gladly lead easier lives if we could. There is such a complexity of reasons why a woman persists in following a certain calling. Men who cry out against her changing position surely forget that the same force which demands progress and unforeseen development of men, demands it of women also, and that some will, infinitely more powerful than individual impulse, has compelled the present economic situation. Industrial conditions are such that a vast number of women must either work or starve, and the most old-fashioned men will, I believe, agree that, of the two, they had best work.

THE LADY MARJORIE MANNERS.
Asked which was her favourite portrait of those she has taken of girls, Madame Lallie Charles chose this.

When women have vanquished masculine disapproval of feminine independence, their difficulties will have been perceptibly lessened. I am inclined to think we might have avoided much of this antagonism had we been less sudden. We have been too abrupt, have hurried violently on our career of conquest, unmindful of the feelings of those of whom we would exact territory.

There is, however, such a thing as compromise even now. Let us meet the men half-way. For instance, so long as there are occupations which are not physically wearing, let these be adopted. By agreeing with our adversaries on this point of physical limitation we immediately score, gaining their sympathy in mild pursuits and paving the way for future activities more valiant.

Photography appeals to me as an excellent compromise occupation for women. Surely no man, however much he may rebel against the general determination of women to get food and clothing, can resent their entering a business so lady-like as this. Not even the physical argument stands against photography, if the testimony of such women as Miss Kate Pragnell, of Brompton Square, Madame Lallie

Charles, Titchfield Road, Regent's Park, and Miss Lizzie Caswall-Smith, of the Gainsborough Studio, Oxford Street, be taken at its proper value.

Miss Pragnell when questioned for THE GIRL'S REALM said :—

"There is no real physical strain about taking pictures. One becomes weary at the work, of course, but it is a weariness which accompanies even the performance of simple household duties."

Madame Charles, whose delightful studio is easily called to mind, agreeing with Miss Pragnell, says :—

"I consider that in no other occupation are women, by reason of physical weakness, so little disqualified to compete with men as in photography."

Another opinion—that of Miss Caswall-Smith :—

"I may say that there is nothing wearing about photography as a business. Not but what we get tired, and that we work hard. But it is a good healthful tiredness, rather than a state of over-wrought nerves, or a reaction after too hard physical labour."

Men are likely to look with comparative favour on the woman who earns her living at something in which her feminine traits of character make her especially useful.

"Attention to detail," quoting Madame Lallie Charles again, "is the without-which-not. Slip-shod methods will not endure in photography. Woman's willingness to look after the little things is one of the chief reasons why she can successfully conduct a photographic business."

Miss Caswall-Smith says, that in her opinion the qualities which fit a woman pre-eminently for the delicate task of taking pictures are the artistic temperament and a lively intuition. Photography has come to be such an art that the more keenly artistic is the photographer, the more valuable is her work in every particular. It is the height of refinement,—this career of picture taking,—and woman's supreme aptitude for it lies in her own refinement.

It is proverbial that woman's intuition is generally to be trusted. She may not be a strictly logical being, but her lack of logic is, I think, amply compensated by her rich endowment of keen perception. And how does she apply this to photography? The thoughtful photographer (and what successful photographer is not thoughtful?) strives to read the character of the person about to be photographed, and then to catch for the likeness that expression which most justly represents the character as read. To this important part of picture taking, then, a woman brings high faculty of intuition.

In two lines of photographic work, I am told, it is granted that women almost without exception excel men. In what is called Picture Photography, where much draping is necessary, woman's knowledge of dress gives her marked advantage over the average man. The mother-instinct, that inborn ability to understand children and to elicit their interest, is probably the secret of her success in photographing children. And when it is remembered that at least three-fourths of the persons photographed are women and children, these feminine talents appear important. The estimate three-fourths is necessarily a very rough one, but it is sufficiently accurate to prove the value of the talents cited. I suppose some children are still photographed by men, and doubtless they are taken very well. But when one visits the studio of a prominent woman photographer, she is likely to leave with a feeling that all the little boys and girls of the world had decided to support female enterprise.

Still another reason why photography is a compromise occupation. The photographer may have a pleasant home-life directly in connection with her studio. This circumstance should appeal to grieving man who laments with notable vigour that women who work must deny themselves the pleasure of the hearthstone.

Photography is unique in the combination it offers to the ambitious woman for home and business career together. The artistic photographer will, moreover, be the artistic home-maker. She will carry that beauty which she constantly seeks to instil into her studio work into the conduct of her household affairs. Madame Lallie Charles seems to have accomplished this very effectively. Certainly nothing could exceed in attractiveness her well-appointed establishment. And I question if a more

thoroughly comfortable pair of people reside in London than those good friends, Miss Pragnell, and her business associate, Miss Stewart. Their house in Brompton Square is a rendezvous for a host of congenial spirits, and as Miss Pragnell has a tremendous amount of what the Americans term "go," there is nothing dull or uninteresting about a visit, brief or long, to "The Court Studio."

These successful women-photographers have a lasting interest in their work. They develop new processes, enlarge their quarters from time to time, travel in order that they may see their own home surroundings in proper perspective. Independence, indeed, is this—an independence, too, which will not be snatched away some day without warning, as is so often true in the case of the woman who works for a salary.

MISS CASWALL-SMITH.

But before I drift too far from the statement of definite reasons why photography is a good profession for women, let me call your attention to the fact that it is a clean business. A woman may take photographs all day without seriously impairing the freshness of her morning toilet. This very freshness of appearance, the air of daintiness which a dainty woman's presence carries with it, is perhaps a strong reason why the public enjoys being photographed by a woman. Photography is distinctly nice work. It is only reasonable that woman's nicety should harmonize with it.

I think I hear some one saying, "All this is very well, but it seems to be merely for the benefit of women who have money. Capital surely is necessary for an independent business venture such as you mention."

Yes, capital is necessary in order to conduct a photographic studio on a large scale. I am afraid there is no getting away from that fact. £200 is needed even if one start modestly and in an unfashionable district. £5,000 is none too much if one would attract society and stage people, always the photographer's important *clientèle*. The ambition to work is so common nowadays, even among girls of some means, that I have in a measure, spoken to them.

MISS CASWALL-SMITH THINKS THIS HER BEST STUDY OF A GIRL.

But photography does not close its doors to the penniless. There are possibilities for the girl without capital. Both men and women photographers now employ young women almost exclusively in preference to men as assistants. They develop the negative, retouch it, print it, develop the print, mount and finish the picture. For this work it is necessary to understand the minute process which follows

the actual taking of the photograph. Such employment is not difficult. The average hours are from 9.30 in the morning to 6.30 at night, and the average salary is 30s. a week.

Will the girl who goes into a subordinate position in a photographer's shop stand any chance of rising to an independent position, you ask?

Her chances of rising are growing brighter every day. Miss Kate Pragnell has long cherished a scheme for the founding of a photographic college or training school for women. Miss Pragnell has fine ideas for educating girls in this branch of art, and then setting them to work in small businesses throughout the country. The scheme includes a finance committee with certain public-spirited friends of Miss Pragnell's for committeemen. Not only would a high grade of work be maintained by her personal supervision, but, in time, the various women would come into the ownership of their studios. Whether she will really found such a college, Miss Pragnell is not yet finally prepared to say, but the mere consideration of so progressive a venture is a hopeful sign.

MADAME LALLIE CHARLES.

More important, however, than any individual success, to which a girl occasionally attains, is, in my opinion, the contribution which the army of women employés in photographic establishments are giving to the future of their profession. Their knowledge and experience will pass on as a definite asset for the women who take up photography twenty years hence. It is the humble employé always who lays the foundation stones. The number of women employed to do subordinate work in photograph shops has even now run up into the thousands. Norway and Sweden, Russia, Italy even, and Switzerland, to say nothing of France and Germany, have, one might almost say, turned their studios over to girl apprentices. In America several women have attained distinction for themselves, and assistant positions are with few exceptions held by women. It is safe to say, however, that so far England, or better, perhaps, London, has produced more high-class women photographers than any other place.

It is reasonable to believe that before long ambitious women, emboldened by the success of those who have blazened out the new path, will begin to dare more. They will take more risks. Some will borrow money, others start with less. Many hesitate to-day because the initial stage of the occupation as applied to women has not yet passed. Those who have succeeded have scarcely yet gained their own confidence. The woman photographer is one of those people who has a future. She may be entering this employment, so full of possibilities, in any of several ways. She may move gradually from the ranks of amoteurs, as so many have done, into earning her living by taking pictures. She may serve as an apprentice twelve months or perhaps two years. She may study in the technical schools. By whatever gate she enters, she may well be hopeful that her calling is to bring much of vivid interest into her life.

A girl who wants to be a photographer and has no money should, I think, try to become an apprentice. In most of the country towns there are photographers who need assistants. The capable girl can, if she watch her opportunity, learn how to take pictures and at the same time live at home. As an apprentice she will be at no expense in obtaining the desired education, and occasionally she will even earn money while she is being educated. Not much, to be sure, but I know of one girl whose employer refused to allow her to give him her services for the year's tuition. He paid her six shillings a week from the first.

Supposing that a girl lives in the real country or in a village where there is no

possible chance of apprenticeship, she must of necessity go to some neighbouring town. But it is not in the least necessary that she go to London. If Miss Pragnell's photographic college should ever become a reality, girls in the provinces will benefit materially. The plan includes the smallest towns and villages. With Miss Pragnell's accredited women in charge of studios, village girls would naturally begin to think of photography as a possible profession for them. Thorough instruction, moreover, would be guaranteed.

It is scarcely fair to mention as typical such women as Miss Caswall-Smith, Miss Pragnell and Madame Charles. They have been strictly an innovation, following closely on the footsteps of that first woman-photographer, Mrs. Cameron, whose beautiful work was her cherished hobby. Mrs. Cameron did not take pictures for money, but she is, nevertheless, remembered as the first woman-photographer.

A certain man-photographer in Regent Street looked at me rather contemptuously the other day when I asked him what he thought of women as photographers. All he said was:—"They have been at it twenty years and they haven't done anything yet."

Well, in presenting photography as a profession for women, and thinking of it rather as a forerunner to more daring encroachments we will be bound to make in the future, I did not suppose the compromise idea would appeal very forcibly to the professional male photographer.

The wise woman who enters the fascinating field of photography will look kindly on her masculine competitor, and remember that her entrance into his domain brings to him complications no less perplexing than those which have forced her out into the troubled world of competition.

"THE GIRL'S REALM" NEEDLEWORK DESIGNS.

VII.—AN EMBROIDERED BAG.

HERE is a design for the now much-used embroidered hand-bags, so useful for holding the handkerchief and purse. The design can be enlarged to the size of a Grannie work-bag or reduced to the size of opera glasses.

For the background a good satin, or a satin de luxe is best; good it must be, or the constant drawing up of the strings when in use will very quickly make it look shabby. If it is wanted as a present for an elderly lady, it would be very effective embroidered on black satin and carried out in silver thread and small gold beads. Embroider all the stems and outlines in silver cord, and the centres of the big leaves with fine silver thread, as in the manner indicated in the sketch.

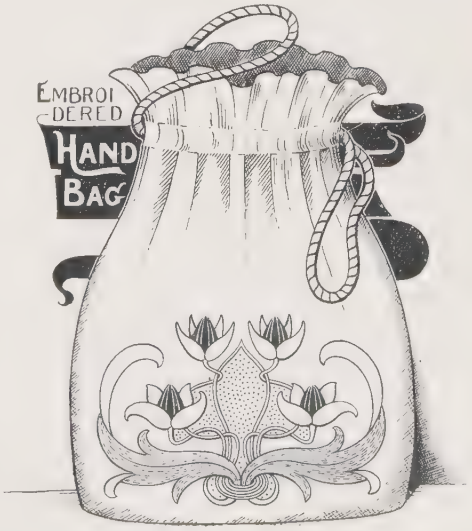
The flowers (especially the centres) could be worked in solid with the silver, as they are small petals, and should look the most important. Small beads should be stitched all over the centre, and the bag, as far as the stitching is concerned, is complete.

For a work-bag, the best material for this is linen, that pale tan, natural colour, on which any colours look well. As the design can now be larger and bolder it could be worked in tapestry wools, carrying it out in as bold a manner as possible. The flower wants treating in bright colours, such as scarlets and golds (this for the centres) and good greens for the leaves, while a touch of black as an outline here and there would help to give it a bright effect.

For an opera bag, white satin and pink flowers with much gold thread and little beads would be dainty. Mr. Ainsworth, who originated the design for us, will help you if a stamped and addressed postcard is enclosed in your letter to him. His address will be found in the advertisement pages.

A NEEDLEWORK COMPETITION.
Six Prizes and Six Diplomas.

THE EDITOR is arranging a Competition in connection with this design. For the best bag, of any size, sent in before November the 28th, a cheque, value Half-a-Guinea, will be given. Five additional Prizes will consist of Books, value of Five Shillings each, and there will be Six Diplomas. Mr. Ainsworth will assist the Editor in judging. The bags will be sent to the Guild Bazaar, to be held in the Portman Rooms on December 3rd next, where they will be sold for the benefit of the Trust Fund.



THE TREVOR TWINS.

The Party at "The Poplars."

By A. KATHARINE PARKES.

Illustrated by Tom Browne.

I.

My name is Alicia Trevor, and I am just fourteen. I am the eldest of "The Trevor Twins," as we are always called at school. New girls, when they first come, smile at the name, for anything more unlike twins it would be impossible to find. Hermione is tall and fair, quite two inches taller than I am. She has lovely curly golden hair, and great blue eyes with long lashes. She is far and away the prettiest girl in the school, and everybody adores her.

As for me, I am small and dark, and when the girls want to tease me they call me the "black-eyed imp." I study myself in the glass occasionally, and wonder whether there is any chance of my looks improving as I grow older. Large eyes are supposed to be an advantage, and mine are certainly large, but then my eyelashes are short. So is my nose, for it turns up abominably. Now, if my hair had curled instead of my nose, it would have been much more to the point. That last sentence sounds a little queer, and I am sure if Mademoiselle were to read it she would say—"Mees Aleecia, you are meexing your met-ty-fours." That is one thing I like about Maddy. She does give me my name in full. Every one else calls me "Lissy" for short, and they are so tiresome about the "hiss" in it. Lizzy is such a dreadfully common name.

Hermy and I have been staying with Grannie just a week, but so many exciting things have happened that it seems more like a month.

Mother and father are out in India, so we always spend half the holidays with Uncle Jim, who is Dad's brother, and the other half with Grannie.

Corfield Manor, where Uncle Jim lives, is a delightful place. He and Aunt Mary are very fond of children, and, besides their own six, all the boys and girls of the neighbourhood run in and out as much as they like. We love staying there, especially at Christmas-time, and the greatest fun of all the year is Aunt Mary's Christmas party. But we have been terribly disappointed this holiday.

We generally get up some theatricals for it, and we meant them to be much better than usual this year. Jim, the eldest boy, and I had written the play, and it was a splendid one, full of highwaymen and ladies in distress. Even the dresses were good, for Jim had managed to borrow some real old coats, and Aunt Mary's maid had made Hermy and me two lovely scarlet riding-dresses with white fur capes and black silk masks all complete. Then, just at the last moment when everything was quite ready, the baby began measles. Of course the party had to be given up, and Aunt Mary packed Hermy and me straight off to Grannie's.

That was on a Monday, and we ought to have stayed at Uncle Jim's till Friday, so, when we got to Wipling Green, there was no one at home except Cook and Elizabeth, and even they were not expecting us. Grannie and Grainger had gone to spend two or three days with an invalid friend, and Cook, instead of opening Aunt Mary's telegram to see whether it ought to be telegraphed on, had stuck it in front of the clock so that Grannie would find it when she got back. It was very lucky for us that Cook and Elizabeth had not also elected to go out for the evening, as we did not arrive till eight o'clock, and, much as we

love every stone of Grannie's little house, we should not have cared to spend an hour or two on her doorstep.

I wrote to Grannie directly, so that my letter would catch the midnight mail and reach her by the second post next day, and Cook went out and posted it at once.

We found it very dull in the house by ourselves next morning. We had not even Grainger to worry. She is Grannie's maid, and as she used to be Mother's nurse she looks on us as a kind of grand-children.

Wipling Green is a dear little village, with a big three-cornered green in the middle. On one side of it are the Church, the Rectory, and the Schools—on the second, Dr. Wardlock's house, the "Waggon and Horses," and some cottages—and on the third is a row of shops, and standing back in the far corner, next the Post-office, is Grannie's little house.

Of course every one in the village knows Hermy and me, so, as there was no one to talk to at home, we started out to tell people that we had come back. We went into the Post-office first to see Mrs. Brown, just for the fun of hearing her say, as she does regularly three times a year, "Lor' sakes, Miss Elisha and Miss Herminy, how you are grown, to be sure!"

But she hardly waited for the usual greeting, she was so full of excitement over a great party that was to take place at The Poplars the same evening.

Just before we left Wipling Green, at the end of the summer holidays, we had heard that The Poplars, the big estate at our end of the village, had been sold. It consists of a lovely old Park and a great big house which had stood empty for over three years—ever since the last owner, an elderly invalid, had died.

The purchaser was a Mr. Crumpton, a rich button manufacturer from North Bingham. Grannie had told us in one of her letters that the family had arrived, but we were not sure from what she had said whether she liked them or not.

According to Mrs. Brown, the "county" had called, as Mr. Crumpton was very popular. But Mrs. Crumpton—and here Mrs. Brown gave one of her peculiar snorts—behaved as if she belonged to the "county" herself, though every one knew that her father kept a butcher's shop in North Bingham.

We inquired eagerly whether there were any children, for the one thing we had pined after for years was to have some friends our own ages at The Poplars. Grannie has a large garden behind her house, and it runs down a hill till it comes to a big wall. There is a little door in this wall which opens on to a right-of-way leading through The Poplars, and the Park has been our favourite playground ever since we can remember. Still, we have always agreed that to make it quite perfect we needed some friends to join our games, for both the Doctor and the Rector are bachelors.

Mrs. Brown said the children were very nice. There seemed to be a good many of them, but she was very mixed about their names and ages. Mrs. Crumpton was going to give a "house-warming" that very night. It was to be a large children's party—a real masked fancy-dress ball. Everything was to be as magnificent as possible, and people were coming from far and near. There were to be over two hundred children—so it was said—and they were not to take off their masks till supper-time, which was fixed for half-past ten.

When Hermy and I had got as much information as we could at the Post Office we went on and visited some more friends, and then went back to dinner, where we found a wire from Grannie to say that she would be home at seven o'clock.

In the afternoon we went out through Grannie's little gate into The Poplars. We know every tree and bush in the Park, so, not bothering about the large new notice boards with "Trespassers will be Prosecuted," we crept along under various pieces of shelter till we got to a bramble bush, which, while it hid us completely, allowed us to get a view of the whole front of the house.

It was most exciting. No less than three confectioners' vans came up round the drive and turned off to the back. Then two huge waggonette-loads of children arrived from the afternoon train, come, we supposed, to stop the night. They were followed by a military band with a cart-load of instruments, and two vans piled up with chairs and benches. Altogether we did not wonder that the neighbourhood was excited. When it grew dark the house burst out into a perfect blaze, and we saw that Mr. Crumpton had actually had electric light put in.

We could hardly drag ourselves away to tea, though we were beginning to get rather cold, and when we got home a fresh disappointment awaited us. Grannie had missed her train and would not reach home till after eleven o'clock.

"What shall we do this evening, Hermy?" I said. "Cook and Elizabeth will spend all their time at the front gate watching the carriages drive by, and it will be too cold to go out into the Park and listen to the band."

"Oh dear! I do wish I was going to the party!" sighed Hermy.

"So do I," I echoed.

"If only they had known we were coming they might have asked us."

"Perhaps they did." I suggested, "and Gran knew that this was the night of the theatricals and declined for us."

"Do you think they did, really?"

"I am almost certain of it. Grannie has called on them, so they must have heard of us."

Hermy nearly wept. "Oh dear!" she said, "how aggravating things are this year. No theatricals and no fancy-dress ball."

"Hermy!" I exclaimed suddenly, "I am sure they must have sent us an invitation, and as Grannie's refusing for us was all a mistake, I don't see why we shouldn't go!"

Hermy looked at me with her eyes and her mouth open. "But, Lissy! just think if we went and said, 'We are the Trevors, and the refusal was a mistake,' and Mrs. Crumpton said, 'But we never asked any Trevors.' She may think our name is March, the same as Gran's."

"You idiot, Hermy! don't you see the point of it. None of the children's names will be known till supper-time, and we shall have to be here to meet Grannie by then. It would be a shame not to use our beautiful dresses and masks, when we are so sure that Mrs. Crumpton meant us to be at the party."

"But what will Cook and Elizabeth say?"

"Oh, they needn't know anything at all about it. We'll tell them that they may lock us into the house and go and watch the carriages and people."

"Oh, Lissy! I daren't really do it."

"Oh, yes, you dare! You must! You shall! Why, we know every corner of the house. Look what games we had there last holidays when it was empty and we used to climb in by the little pantry window."

"Whatever should we do if any one recognised us?"

"But they won't. How can they when we've got our masks on? Oh! won't we have fun!" and I began to dance round and round the room, whirling Hermy with me.

Cook and Elizabeth jumped at the idea of leaving us alone in the house; I expect we had spoilt their arrangements for the evening by our sudden appearance. They promised to be back long before Grannie arrived, and, after bringing us our supper at seven o'clock, they went off determined not to miss a single carriage.

I must say I felt a little guilty as we slipped into our riding dresses. We had them copied from an old picture that Grannie had lent us, and the scarlet cloth with the brass buttons and the white fur really looked very nice. They were a little too thick for dancing, but we should be able to do without any shawls for crossing the park, which would be an advantage. We did not want to have to leave many things in the cloak-room

When we were ready we crept quietly out of the back door and locked it after us. There was no moon, but the stars were shining and there was enough light for us to see our way.

It was a dry night and not at all cold, and there were so many carriages that the people were getting out in the drive and walking up to the house instead of waiting for their turn at the front door. We soon managed to join ourselves on to a party, and, in a few minutes, we entered the house without the smallest difficulty. We went up to the cloak-room and tidied ourselves. We had to leave our goloshes there, but there were no names on them and I made up my mind that, if we couldn't get hold of them easily, we would go without them and not mind if we did get our buckled shoes dirty on the way home.

We felt a little nervous as we went down the great staircase, but, like the rest of the children, we shook hands at the bottom with Henry VIII., in a brilliant crimson costume, and Katharine of Aragon, in black velvet and pearls, whom we supposed were Mr. and Mrs. Crumpton.

Then the fun began, and I tell Hermy that, though the after consequences were so dreadful, I should really like to go to a masked ball every night of the week. The masks were a little bit uncomfortable at first, but we soon got used to them, and it was so funny talking to people when we didn't know their names and they didn't know ours. The two partners Hermy and I liked best were a Prince in blue satin and a yellow Mandarin, but we danced with any amount of Pierrots, soldiers, sailors, and I don't know how many other things besides.

There were no other dresses like ours in the room, which was rather lucky, as we could always find each other quite easily. I spoke to Hermy several times during the evening, and we arranged to meet by the grandfather's clock in the hall at a quarter past ten. It was a terrible nuisance having to leave so early, but we did not dare stay till later.

But, when the time came, we found it was far more difficult to get away unnoticed than it was to arrive. The blue Prince and the yellow Mandarin both followed us into the hall, which was already crowded with children, and on each side of the front door stood a stately footman.

At last, in despair, I trod on Hermy's dress. "Oh dear!" I said, "your gathers are torn out. I must go upstairs and mend them for you." That

got us up to the cloak room safely, but I could not imagine how we were ever going to get through the people in the hall or explain to the footman that we wanted the front door opened without asking him to call us a carriage.

There was no one upstairs, so as soon as we had found our goloshes I crept to the top of the banisters and peeped through. Alas! my blue Prince and Hermy's Mandarin were still waiting for us at the bottom. We were both beginning to wish that we hadn't come, but I knew that, if I let Hermy see that I was nervous she would dissolve into floods of tears, so I pretended that things were exactly as I had expected them to be.

Then we heard a gong. "Now, Hermy," I said, "that's the supper bell. We must make a bolt down the back stairs, trusting to luck that all the servants will be watching the procession to the big billiard room."

We had no difficulty in finding our way, and how we flew down the passage! We met one maid just outside the cloak room, who called after us, "That's the wrong way, Miss!" but as I guessed, all the others were watching the children march down to supper.

The back door was unlocked and we slipped out quietly, and we both gave deep sighs of relief when we found ourselves again in the park. It was horribly dark and a drizzling rain had begun to fall, but we got to Grannie's gate at last, and were safe in our rooms before we heard the clock striking a quarter to eleven, and Cook and Elizabeth letting themselves in by the front door. It did not take us many minutes to tear off our things and get into our ordinary clothes, and we had been sitting in the dining room several minutes before Grannie's cab drove up. It was so jolly to see her again, and to have her come in and tuck us up in bed, that we thought little more that night about our adventures at The Poplars.

II.

We were all very late at breakfast the next morning, and we had hardly begun when Grainger burst in. Grannie looked astonished, for the dear old thing generally moves about as fast as a snail.

"Oh'm," she said, "such a thing has never happened in the village before!"

"Whatever is the matter, Grainger?" asked Gran.

"Oh'm, you know the great ball at The Poplars last night? Two thieves got in dressed up as some of the company in masks, and went off with all Mrs. Crumpton's diamonds and a lot of jewellery that belonged to the other people that were staying in the house."

"WE FELT A LITTLE NERVOUS AS WE SHOOK HANDS AT THE BOTTOM WITH HENRY VIII. AND KATHARINE OF ARAGON."—(*p.* 988.)

"Are they quite certain it was some of the guests?" asked Grannie in horror.

"Yes'm, they are quite certain about that. It was two young ladies in red cloth dresses and white fur capes, and one of the maids saw them slipping away down the back stairs."

They say that a drowning man sees a vision of his whole past life. I am sure I saw a vision of the whole of the future in the next five seconds. I pictured Hermy and me being arrested and taken to the police station. I saw us tried by an unsympathetic jury and condemned by a cruel judge. Finally we were torn from our weeping and distracted parents to spend our lives in a

dreary prison before Grannie had time to make a fresh remark.

"Nonsense, Grainger, it must have been some of the people who were helping with the supper, or the musicians."

"Oh, but'm, no one saw the two young ladies in the scarlet riding dresses after supper, and, when the masks were all taken off, none of the visitors were missing, so they couldn't have been invited guests."

Hermy was as white as a sheet, and I was wondering whether I had any colour myself when Grannie looked our way. She had looked a little surprised when Grainger mentioned scarlet riding dresses, and, after that, one glance at our faces was enough.

"That will do, Grainger," she said; "perhaps we shall hear some more authentic news later."

Grainger looked surprised, as Grannie does not often snub her, but she is as blind as a bat, so she did not notice us at all.

As soon as she had gone Grannie turned to us. "Alicia and Hermione, am I to understand that it was my grand-daughters who disgraced themselves last night by going to a party to which they had not been invited?"

I wished the floor would open and swallow me, but I just made a clean breast of the whole thing.

When I had finished Gran said, "As it happens, Alicia, though I have called on Mrs. Crumpton I have not yet met her, so she has not heard of your existence from me. It is even possible that no one in the village thought it of sufficient importance to mention to her. In any case, she did not send either of you an invitation."

Grannie knows how to make us feel thoroughly small when she wants to do it. Hermy had been crying steadily ever since Grainger went, and she sobbed out, "Oh, Grannie, shall we be sent to prison?"

"Possibly," replied Grannie. "I cannot foresee what the eventual consequences of your act will be, or what trouble you may have brought on your friends and relations; but the first thing you have to do now is to go straight with me to Mrs. Crumpton's and apologise for the unladylike way in which you have behaved."

I really thought Hermy was going to faint, so I said, "Don't you think Grannie, as I suggested it all, it would be enough if I went and spoke for both."

I think she agreed with me about Hermy, for she said, "Very well, Lissy, go upstairs and put on your things."

I nearly danced upstairs even with that awful interview in front of me for I knew that if Grannie had got back to "Lissy" the worst of her displeasure was over.

It really and truly was an "awful interview" with Mrs. Crumpton, and I shall never be able to look at her again without a cold shudder running down my back.

Grannie told the story and I stammered out an apology. Then Grannie finished by saying, "I thought you ought to know the truth at once so that you could take your detectives off the false scent they are following."

"It remains to be seen whether the scent is false or not," replied Mrs. Crumpton in a freezing tone. She had been barely civil from the beginning, and I hated myself for having put Grannie into such a position. But the last insult was too much for any one to bear, and Grannie said, in a tone that impressed even Mrs. Crumpton, "I shall of course employ a detective myself to take care that my grand-daughters' characters are fully cleared." And she sailed out of the room.

A boy, who was sitting reading in the hall outside jumped up to open the door for us. He squeezed my hand, and I guessed from his voice that he was my blue Prince.

"Never you mind," he said, "it'll all turn out right. The Mater's a bit cross this morning after losing her diamonds, but I told her all along I knew it wasn't you."

My blue Prince was really a very nice boy, and I thought regretfully of all the delightful games we might have had in the park if I had never carried out my mad plan.

As we went home I gave a sigh, and Granny said, "Never mind, Lissy, we must hope for the best."

"I wasn't thinking of the diamonds then, Gran, though I can't tell you how awfully sorry I am to have been the cause of all this trouble,—I expect they'll even station a detective outside your gate—but I was thinking what a pity it was that mother didn't marry Lord Portwyn when he asked her."

"What do you mean, Alicia? What do you know about Lord Portwyn?" she said sharply.

"Why I thought every one knew that he wanted to marry mother! Don't you see, if we'd been the Hon. Alicia and the Hon. Hermione Lapworth-Hartwell, Mrs. Crumpton would have been only too flattered at our having gone to her party in disguise."

"Lissy, Lissy," said Grannie, shaking her head, "Take care that your imagination does not get you into trouble some day!"

We went straight to the Post Office and Grannie telegraphed to Scotland Yard for a detective. They wired back that they would send one at

once, and he arrived by the afternoon train. His name was Perkins, and he looked like a retired soldier.

We were all three waiting for him in the dining-room, and he stood up stiffly with a perfectly solemn face while Grannie gave him the facts, When he had entered them in his note-book he turned to me rather sharply, as though he thought that a young lady who could behave as I had done was not above suspicion. "Would you give me your name, Miss?"

"Alicia and Hermione Trevor," I answered. I did not mean him to bother Hermy if I could help it.

"Not Major Trevor's twins?" he exclaimed, jumping up as if I had shot him.

We all looked astonished, and he turned to Grannie and went on, "Begging your pardon'm for speaking so quickly, but I did not think there could be two other young ladies with those names."

"You are quite right," said Grannie, still looking mystified, "these are Colonel Trevor's twin daughters."

"Oh, yes, to be sure! he must be Colonel now. It's a long time since I was his servant in India when these young ladies were born. I left the army and joined the police when they were just three."

"Why," I said, "you must be the Perkins father's always talking about as the only man that ever blacked his boots properly."

Perkins' face was now as smiling as it had before been solemn, and I am sure we all three felt like reprieved criminals.

"Just fancy the Major remembering me like that," he said. "And how you young ladies are grown! You used to come and help me with my work in your beautiful little white frocks, and I had to roll you up in dusters to keep you clean. It was Miss Alicia who always had to have the blacking brush to play with."

We had to stop his reminiscences at last and bring him back to the missing diamonds, but it was very nice to have such a warm friend, and even Grannie began to look a little happier.

He left us finally to find a room in the village, after taking careful notes of all we could tell him about the party itself, and also about the park and the interior of the house.

"Now, Miss Alicia," he said as he went, "you always used to be sharp as a needle. Keep your eyes open and tell me everything that you see. One never knows what information will be useful."

It is funny how unexpectedly things turn out. I daresay our Ayah was awfully angry when we would insist on helping Perkins black Dad's boots, and yet if we hadn't done it he would have been quite as ready to arrest us as to arrest any one else. Now, I think he would rather lose the £100 reward that Mr. Crumpton has offered, than have to drag "the Major's twins" off to prison.

III.

Grannie made us come out for a walk with her after breakfast the next day, as she said, however badly we had behaved, it would never do for people to think we were ashamed to show our faces. The whole village knew the story, and though people agreed that "Mrs. March's young ladies was terrible ones for tricks," they were very indignant at our being suspected of anything worse.

"IT REALLY AND TRULY WAS AN AWFUL INTERVIEW WITH MRS. CRUMPTON."—(*p.* 990.)

Grannie had to go out in the afternoon, and she told us not to go into the village again, so we settled ourselves down to read. We did not expect her back to tea till five o'clock, and just as it was beginning to get dusk I thought I would look for a

favourite old copy of "Little Women," which I always read through every holiday.

"Good gracious, Hermy," I suddenly exclaimed, "I must have left it in the Haunted Oak last summer. Don't you remember we had so much to carry we said we'd go back for it, and we never did? I'll just run down there now and get it out. Oh, dear! I'm afraid it will be quite spoilt."

The Haunted Oak is a large tree in The Poplars not far from Grannie's gate, and the ghost of an ancient forester blowing a hunting horn is supposed to wander round it on dark nights. Hermy and I were the only people who knew that it was hollow as there is no way in from the side, only from the top. Having found it out by accident, we had kept the secret very carefully and had hammered a few wedges into the trunk so that we could climb in and out easily. Inside we had fitted up some little seats and shelves, and it was the most lovely place for secrets imaginable. I used to tell Hermy ghost stories there sometimes till she scarcely dare climb out of the tree for fear the ancient forester should be waiting for her outside.

"PERKINS BLEW HIS WHISTLE AND TURNED UP THE LANTERN, THE OTHER MAN SEIZED THE GROOM."—(*p.* 993.)

I didn't much like going into The Poplars again, but I wanted the book badly. It was not quite dark out of doors, and I soon climbed into the tree and found the poor thing in a damp lump at the bottom.

I was just going to get out again when, to my horror, I heard footsteps on the leaves outside. I was certain it was the ghost at last, and my heart thumped so loudly that it sounded like the school-gong. I expected every minute to hear the forester blow his horn, when I knew I should be obliged to follow him down to the Hunter's Pool at the bottom of the Park, to which place he was supposed to lure his victims and then drown them. I thought of poor Grannie and Hermy, and of their grief when I was carried home by the weeping villagers, and how, even Mrs. Crumpton would feel sorry for having suspected me when she heard of my awful fate.

Then the steps stopped, and some one, who certainly sounded very solid, began to tap on the trunk as if impatient. I was so frightened I did not dare to move and hardly to breathe, though I was beginning to think that it could not be the ghost after all. The person, whoever it was, grew more and more impatient till at last another footstep sounded in the distance.

In a few seconds I heard a man's voice say eagerly, "Well, have you got them?"

"Got them? No indeed!" was the answer, in a girl's voice with a foreign accent.

"Why, you wrote to me to meet you here this evening, and I've had a job to get off," said the man.

"Yes, but I want to know first what you are going to give me for the stuff."

"Halves, of course!"

"That's all very well, but if I give you the things how do I know that I shall get the money? £100 down to begin with, if you please, or you don't get one of them!"

For a quarter of an hour at least they argued angrily, and I soon found out that the girl was Mrs. Crumpton's French maid, and that the missing jewels were the subject of dispute.

They came to an arrangement just as I was getting so cramped that I felt I could not stop still a moment longer. The man, who was Dr. Wardlock's groom, was to meet the girl again at the Haunted Oak at half-past eight, after he had driven his master out to dinner, and she was to hand over the jewels in exchange for £50, which was all he would give.

When they were gone, and I was sure that they must be quite out of sight and hearing, I climbed out and ran home, where I found Grannie and Hermy just starting out to look for me. It was so nice to be in a warm, brightly lighted house again after the haunted tree that I lay straight down on the sofa and cried, which was an extraordinary thing for me to do.

Perkins had just arrived with the day's report, so, after Grannie had made me drink some hot tea and I felt better, I poured out the whole story to his astonished ears. Luckily he had examined the Park carefully by daylight, so he was able to recognise the Haunted Oak at once from my description. He was as excited as we were, and hoped to arrest the thieves in the very act of exchanging the jewels for the money. He did not stay long as he had to make arrangements about magistrates and warrants and all sorts of things that I couldn't understand.

When he was gone we settled in to a long evening's waiting, as we could not go to bed without knowing what had happened. We tried to play games and read, but we kept imagining all the time that we heard shots and shrieks in The Poplars.

It was twelve o'clock before Perkins came, and I saw at once from his face that everything was all right.

Grannie made him sit down and have some supper, as he looked quite worn out, and all his coat was torn and dirty. But though tired and ragged he was very triumphant.

He had got hold of six policemen from the nearest town and had stationed five of them in various hiding places near the Haunted Oak. Then he and the other man had stretched themselves out flat along the largest branches of the tree itself. It was a pitch dark night, so that they were quite invisible.

The partners had not arrived till after nine o'clock, and then there had been a lot more haggling about terms. At last, after much persuasion, the girl had produced some cases and the man had struck a match to see if they were the right ones. Perkins had been able to see the momentary glitter of the diamonds, and had given the signal to the man beside him.

They had dropped down suddenly to the ground, and while Perkins blew his whistle and turned up his lantern, the other man seized the groom. The remaining policemen were quickly on the spot, and though there was a frightful struggle the thieves were soon overpowered, and taken to Wipling Green police-station, where they would be securely guarded till they could be transferred to the prison in the neighbouring town.

Perkins had then gone up to The Poplars and restored the diamonds. Mrs. Crumpton, though delighted to get them back, would hardly believe that her maid was the culprit. However, some other jewels which were still missing were discovered inside the girl's mattress, which at last convinced her of her guilt.

* * * * *

They say that "All's well that ends well," and the next morning Mr. Crumpton and my blue Prince arrived with a letter of apology from Mrs. Crumpton for having suspected us. I wonder whether they found it very difficult to make her write it.

We liked Mr. Crumpton very much indeed. He said he hoped that Hermy and I would have lots of fun with his children in the park, and we were to play in it just as much as ever we liked.

So while he and Grannie talked, Hermy and I planned lots of games with the blue Prince, and we are going to have the first of them to-morrow, when he is coming to tea here with three of his brothers and sisters.

We have had no time to think of play during the last few days. We have been far too busy. As soon as the suspense was over, Grannie set us each a task as a punishment for going to The Poplars party. Mine was to write out an account of the whole affair, and Hermy's was to learn a long sonata.

It's such a pity that it's always so easy to see one's mistakes afterwards. I see quite well now that it was very wrong of us to go to the party, and Grannie says that if I had stopped to think beforehand I should have known it just as well then. That is why, she says, she is punishing us, "in the hope that it will impress on our minds the necessity of stopping to think."

There's one comfort—she is not really very angry with us. If she had been, she'd have given Hermy the story to write and me the sonata to learn, and I do so hate learning long pieces of classical music.

EDITOR'S NOTE.—Those of our readers who are interested in the doings of the Trevor Twins will be pleased to know that their further adventures will be related in the new volume which begins with the next number.

THE FRONT VIEW OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

Milton Mount.

THE FAMOUS SCHOOL AT GRAVESEND.

By C. N. Spender.

Milton Mount College was originally founded for the education of the daughters of Congregational Ministers, and from the beginning was planned on a noble scale and with singularly large and enlightened aims. When Mr. Samuel Morley laid the foundation stone on October 5th, 1871, we must remember that English girls' schools were, for the most part, in a very inefficient and unsatisfactory condition. Almost every public school for secondary education was closed to girls; endowments were all used for boys; High schools had hardly begun; and the report of the Schools' Enquiry Commission revealed an appalling state of ignorance and want of method. Perhaps that accounted for what seemed a remarkable and sudden growth of public opinion in regard to the education of women; at any rate, the governing body of Milton Mount were determined that the education given at their school should be second to none in the country, and that no pains should be spared to equip every girl to earn her own living or to be a useful member of her own home. The careers of several generations of girls educated at Milton Mount show how well this design has been carried out.

The whole spirit of the early reports is one of enthusiastic faith and trust that those who began such a needful work would have the means given to them to carry it through. For the school was a venture of faith and prayer from the beginning, and a venture which was nobly responded to by Congregationalists in all parts of England. Applications poured in and the need seemed so great that, after the building had been planned and begun, it was arranged to alter the plans and make it capable of accommodating 150 girls instead of 110. It is impossible now to view the noble proportions of the long Gothic building, standing on rising ground and surrounded by two acres of garden, without a feeling of admiration for those who laboured so long and so lovingly, that their daughters might be "as the

MISS CONDER,
The well-beloved Principal of Milton Mount.

polished corners of the temple," and who had the largeness of heart to be in many respects far in front of their generation in enlightened views as to the education of women.

For the last ten years the school has been thrown open to the children of laymen, a change which has proved of the utmost benefit, not merely as regards the financial position of the school, but by broadening the thought and life of the girls, and removing the disadvantages which arise from drawing all pupils from the same class.

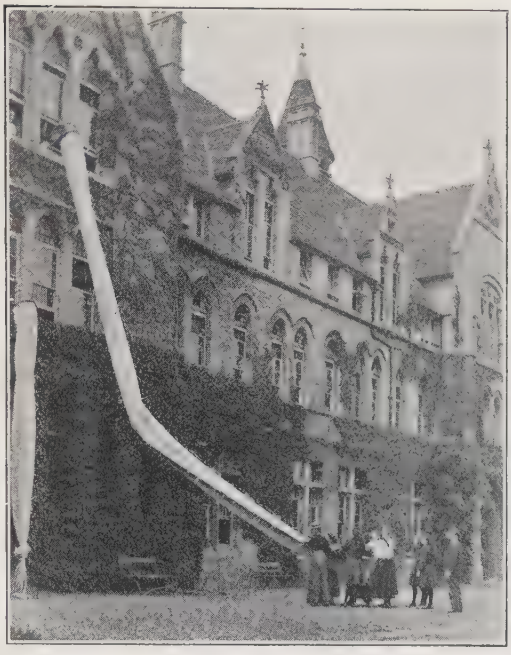


Photo. by Raillon, Purley.

FIRE-ESCAPE PRACTICE AT MILTON MOUNT.

As can be seen by the bend in the escape, a girl has hazarded the descent

The first head-mistress of Milton Mount was Miss Hadland. Her name is a much honoured one in the annals of the school, for she was an educationalist in the truest and widest sense. It was owing to her wisdom and foresight that there has never been anything narrow or institution-like about Milton Mount. The reports of the school-work of the earliest years are a record of enthusiasm among both teachers and taught. For the school threw open the doors of knowledge to many who were thirsting to enter. Miss Conder, who was educated at Cheltenham and Girton, where she took a Second Class in the Classical Tripos, has been head-mistress for the last thirteen years. "It would be difficult" we are told, "to speak in adequate terms of her powers of administration and her personal influence over the girls," and two days' residence in the college assured me that this was no idle adulation.

All forms down to the Third are prepared for some public examination, the lower forms working for the College of Preceptors and the Cambridge Senior and Junior Examinations, while the Sixth Form is prepared for the London Matriculation and Intermediate Arts, the various groups of the Cambridge Higher Local, and for entrance at Girton and Newnham. The girls leave at seventeen unless they are preparing for these higher examinations, or making a special study of music or drawing. In that case they remain until nineteen or twenty, often helped by grants from a special scholarship fund, and from what is called the "Privileged Sixth." As much freedom as possible is allowed to these girls, and they are encouraged in every way to work and think for themselves, and to undertake some responsibilities among the younger children.

A GLIMPSE OF THE PLAYING FIELDS OF MILTON MOUNT.

A game of Hockey is in full swing.

Milton Mount, like most large public schools, has certain traditional customs of its own. One of these, and perhaps the most interesting, is the election of Captain or Head of School. On the first Saturday of the autumn term

the whole school assembles in the dining-hall to choose a captain from the "Privileged Sixth." All may vote who are over twelve years old, and have been at least a year in the school; and Miss Conder assured me that the girls use this power of universal suffrage most wisely, and that rarely in the annals

THE DINING HALL OF MILTON MOUNT.

of the school has the power fallen upon one whom the mistresses would not themselves have chosen. Milton Mount seems to be governed entirely upon the principles of self-reliance and self-respect. "Have as few rules as possible, but see that these are absolutely kept," is Miss Conder's precept.

Until the last six years, no girls were admitted to Milton Mount under the age of ten, but it was often found that girls of that age were so backward that it has been judged wise to open a preparatory school for little ones from eight to ten. Berkeley House is about half-a-mile from the larger school, and generally accommodates about twenty little girls—"My babies," as Miss Wolstenholme, who is at the head of the preparatory school, fondly calls them. The report says: "The children trained here show a marked superiority in their work over most of the same age who enter the College without this previous preparation. It has also been of the greatest use in securing for the elder girls some experience and training in teaching. Five student-teachers who have been at Milton Mount reside at Berkeley House, where they gain experience of all kinds in the care of children, besides having time to carry on their own education.

In the summer holidays of 1890 serious defects were discovered in the drainage system of the College, and the Governors were confronted with the alternative of closing the school while the necessary alterations were carried out, or of temporarily moving it. The latter alternative was decided upon, and after considerable difficulty had been experienced in finding a suitable place, the Manor House at Felixstowe was taken and made ready for the reception of the girls. Their arrival caused much excitement among the townspeople, and all in the neighbourhood of the station turned out to see the long stream of girls file past, when the special train deposited them there on the first day of the autumn term. Happily the autumn was a particularly beautiful one, and the girls were able to enjoy all the delight of having the shore as their playground for the greater part of the term. The accommodation inside the house was decidedly limited, and the dim light of candles upstairs, the scarcity of hot water, and the difficulties of cooking in a kitchen with a perpetually smoky chimney were only some among many inconveniences. But the pleasures of the sea-side more than made up for it all,

THE STUDIO AT MILTON MOUNT.
Which many a budding girl artist recalls with affection.

and the term was looked upon as a prolonged picnic.

In December the weather became bitterly cold, and the Cambridge candidates will not easily forget their dark walks through the snow in the early winter mornings to catch the Ipswich train, or the kindness of the Ipswich ladies who provided them with hot tea and bread and butter after their journey before the examination began. This episode in the history of the school reminds one forcibly of Mr. Thring moving the whole of his Uppingham boys to North Wales in much the same dilemma.

Every one was delighted to get back to Milton Mount, and the girls never appreciated their cubicles and spacious house as much as they did after the comparative rough-and-ready life at Felixstowe. These cubicles are a great feature of the house. They are arranged in long corridors. Each corridor has a mistress in charge, who has a room at the end; and the arrangement at the tables in the dining-hall is according to corridors, though all the girls in turn sit at the high table with the head mistress about once a month.

There is a beautiful organ in the dining-hall, which is used at the prayers which follow breakfast and tea. The singing at Milton Mount has always been famous, but I was hardly prepared for its excellency when the first singing-class kindly gave me a short recital. I happened to have alighted upon a monthly "conduct holiday" for my visit, and the head-mistress laughingly assured me that I should carry away the idea that no work was ever done. All I can say is that I enjoyed myself as much as the girls who had earned their holiday, and felt very thankful for the atmosphere of leisure which gave Miss Conder time to show me everything. This conduct-holiday is another traditional institution at Milton Mount. Every one who has *not* lost a conduct mark has a half-holiday, and if by any chance *nobody* in the whole school has lost a conduct mark in the month, a whole holiday for everybody is proclaimed!

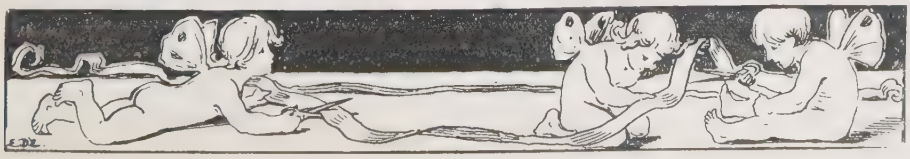
The usual arrangement of the day is rather like that of a boys' public school. Breakfast is at 7.30, and special leave has to be obtained for any work done before that hour. From 8.45 until 11 A.M. first-school takes place. In that time I witnessed a cookery lesson given to about fifty girls in the large lecture room. From 11 until 12.30 there is a break for lunch and exercise, followed by second-school from 12.30 until 2 P.M., when every one dines. The afternoon until 4 P.M. is devoted to games and out-door exercise. Preparation and needlework fill the time before 6.30 tea. After tea there is more preparation till 8 P.M. Then there is half-an-hour of general recreation before bed-time, which is at 8.30 for all but the eldest girls.

The school owes much to the kindness of Mr. Arnold, who lends a most beautiful field in his grounds for hockey and cricket. The games and the gymnasium are under the control of a lady who was trained at Madame Oesterberg's Physical Training College. I had the pleasure of watching a very spirited hockey match between two Forms, and was also invited to a school dance in the dining-hall in the evening. This was very enjoyable, and the programmes designed for the occasion were pretty and artistic.

Ablett's system in drawing is taught, and has been found a very great success in encouraging original work. In music the school does very creditably in the examinations of the "Associated Board of the Royal Academy and Royal College," and there is a small orchestra, so that it is possible to have occasional concerts.

The fire-drill given for my benefit was most exciting. Maidens large and maidens small were shot one by one down the long fire-escape from a top window, to be hauled out laughing below. Last February there was a real fire caused by the carelessness of a servant. A class-room was gutted in the middle of the night, and finally the housekeeper was roused, none too soon, by the ringing of an electric bell, where the heat had fused the wire. Every one behaved with great presence of mind, and by the time the girls were roused and were ready to use the escapes if necessary, all danger was over.

Space almost fails me to tell of the "Old Girls' Guild," founded in 1888, for the purpose of uniting old Miltonians to their school. Every member of this Guild is a subscriber to the school funds, and many of them contribute to the news sheet, which is published annually. Their badge is ivy, to symbolise their clinging affection to their old school.



The Wasted Wealth of the Waysides.

WITH SEVERAL DELICIOUS RECIPES.

By PHŒBE ALLEN,

Author of "Playing at Botany," &c.

IT was long ago, when, as children, we spent many happy holidays in the heart of the Black Forest, that we learnt how many wild herbs are "good to eat" from the hard-working, thrifty peasants, who know so well how to turn to account the green things of the earth.

How they rifled hill-side and hedgeway, forest-borders and river-bank of the indigenous vegetable spoils, some of which were destined for their own consumption, some for sale at the nearest town-market. At first we marvelled half-pityingly at these simple people's greed for such wayside rubbish, but when we had tasted the results of their wild harvesting, we were fired by the desire to make "the old folks at home" take a leaf out of their book, or more literally, a great many leaves out of their own hedges.

"We'll write a book about all we have eaten here," we said, "and convert every one to eat the same."

So we vowed one morning, starting off with hooked sticks and vast baskets, to loot the hedges of ripe dog-rose heps for the making of the delicious confection, for which we will give the recipe later on.

It was late autumn, but the October hedges were still aglow with their sunset-tinted leaves and gorgeous berries, although Jack Frost had already passed that way. Otherwise, we should not have set out on our quest, for the heps are not fit for gathering till after the first frost.

But we found that we were not the first to advocate "the cause."

"It would be well," writes Dr. Lankester, for instance, "if our clergy in rural districts would instruct and guide the poor to the right use of the health-giving plants with which they are surrounded. . . Take for instance that well-known plant, the Chickweed, so common in waste and uncultivated ground throughout the world. This boiled forms an excellent green vegetable resembling Spinach in flavour and very wholesome. Or, again, the Cow-parsnip, a common wayside plant, which if properly treated, may become so valuable as a vegetable, for the leaves and shoots, if gathered when they are just sprouting from the ground, and dressed like Asparagus, will taste very much like the latter and almost as good."

Let us begin with a list of wild salad stuffs. All the leaves of the following plants are excellent: Bitter-cress (Ladies' Smock), Brooklime, Common Salad Burnet, (bruised) Field Penny Cress (these leaves when bruised have a very faint flavour of onion, and are used successfully by the French to flavour omelettes), Dandelion (when young and blanched), Ivy-leaved Toad-flax, Lamb's Lettuce, Scurvy Grass, Orpine (these leaves when bruised taste like cucumber), Smooth Sow-thistle, Purple Sea-rocket, Wood Sorrel and Common Sorrel. Although in the Paris markets the leaves of this latter are as much in demand as green peas, we in England entirely neglect it. Good salad stuffs are also the young shoots and leaf-stalks of Common Alexanders (eaten raw, they taste like celery), young shoots of Greater Burdock and Yarrow, the stalks of Marsh and Woolly-headed Thistles. These latter should be peeled and soaked some hours in water to correct their bitterness. For these homely salads we have seen an equally homely dressing prepared from the ground seeds of Charlock, which yield a very nice-tasted mustard, stirred into vinegar made from sloes, to which is added the oil extracted from ripe Privet berries. Except for its paler hue, this latter might have passed for good olive oil.

Again, our hedgerows are rich in substitutes for cabbage and stuffs to serve as good pot-herbs. Here are some of the most easily found: the leaves of Wild Cabbage, Winter-cress, Common and Marsh-Mallows, Smooth Sow-thistle, Marsh Woundwort (these latter are wholesome, nourishing and very pleasant-tasted), and Charlock. Also the leaves of the less common Alkanet and Sea-lovage, and the roots of Herb Bennet. As substitutes for Spinach, we recommend the leaves of All-good or Good King Henry, Sea-beet—much nicer than our garden Spinach—Chickweed and Common Nettle. A small handful of Common Sorrel leaves added to Nettle leaves makes an excellent Spinach.

Here are some substitutes for Sea-kale: the young shoots and leaf-stalks of Common Alexanders, young stems of the Common Nettle—these, if earthed up like Celery, become so white and tender that when well boiled they have actually passed as Sea-kale—the young shoots of Sea-holly, and, of course, the Wild Kale itself. The Asparagus has many uncultivated counterfeits, viz., the young shoots of All-good, Bladder-Campion, Common Cow-parsnip, Solomon's Seal, Willow-herb, the *flowering* shoots of Sea-holly, stalks of Greater Burdock (peeled and boiled), and roots of Rampion Bell-flower, boiled and served with white sauce.

It is wonderful what thistles may be made to yield, besides serving in salads. The scaly flower-cups of the Scotch, Marsh and Woolly-headed thistles, if boiled, taste quite as good as their garden kinsman, the Globe Artichoke. The leaf-stalks of Spear-thistle, if peeled and boiled, make an excellent green vegetable; the flowers, moreover, like those of the Artichoke, have the property of curdling milk; also, if the stalks are cut up and baked in pies like Rhubarb, with a little ginger and sugar, they make good tarts, or, boiled with bay-leaves, mace and vinegar, they make a famous pickle.

As regards roots, those of Bald-money, boiled like turnips, are eaten by the Highlanders; the root-stock of common Cuckoo-pint contains a large amount of very nutritious farinaceous material, formerly in great favour as "Portland Sago." Dandelion roots washed, cut into cubes, roasted and reduced to powder, supply a palatable coffee; common Earth-nuts, well roasted, are fair rivals of chestnuts; the roots of Herb Bennet, stewed in broth, are most aromatic; those of Lady's-mantle are very nourishing and, when boiled or roasted, resemble parsnips; the roots of Marsh Mallow yield the guimauve gum; the tubers of Early Purple Orchis abound in nutritious starchy material, of which the 'Seafaring Folks'' favourite beverage, "Salep," was formerly made; and the roots of Silver-weed, boiled or roasted, are parsnip-like in taste, and so sustaining, that we are told that the inhabitants of the Hebrides have often lived on them for months together, actually ploughing them up wholesale for use. Seeing how abundant the Silver-weed is with us, it would be well worth while to cultivate the acquaintance of its roots. The bulbs of the Common Star of Bethlehem, if roasted and eaten like chestnuts, contain so much nutrition that in the East, where they are dried and stored, they form an important item in the Mecca pilgrims' provisions.

Very nutritive are the roots of Marsh-Woundwort, which, when boiled, form a most wholesome and pleasant dish, and considering what an excellent sweetmeat may be made from the root of the Elecampane, it is strange that it should be one of our most neglected wayside plants. Good pickles can be made from the young flower-buds of the Broom, resembling capers; from all the green parts of Purslane, very pungent; from the young shoots of Common Reed, cut from that part of the root which has not been exposed to the light, and from the very succulent leaves of the Rock-samphire. Rose-heps pickles are also good.

Endless are the uses to which the wild berries and seeds can be applied for the making of "aigre-doux" sauces and jellies, notably those of the Mountain-ash, Wild Service, Haws, Heps, etc., whilst excellent bread-stuff can be made from the seeds of the Floating Meadow-grass, the grass which under cultivation yields the Manna-Croup or groats of commerce. The roasted ripe seeds of the Yellow Iris may serve as coffee, those of the Yellow Water Lily, with their pleasant nutty flavour, if boiled and served on toast with butter, cayenne and salt, are very savoury, whilst the pods and seeds, *when green*, of the Yellow Vetchling can be eaten either in broth or made into very palatable bread. The ripe seeds are unwholesome.

Very pleasant acid drinks can be made from an infusion of Wood-sorrel leaves, and also from Mountain-ash berries, whilst we have tasted a delicious lemonade which the French make from Lime-blossoms.

Cowslips, Primroses and Elderberries do not come under the head of neglected wealth, but the use of Elder-blossom, from which the delightful Elder-flower wine of our grandmothers was made, might well be revived. Tansy cakes and puddings (a compound of leaves with eggs and butter) are still in favour with some of our rustics, and we have eaten capital omelettes seasoned with Tansy leaves. The young shoots of the Common Bistort or Snakeweed are not altogether overlooked, for they are still eaten in the North of England in a favourite dish, known as the "Easter Giant."

Our space, not our subject, is exhausted, so we will only add, according to promise, a recipe for the making of Rose-hep Preserve. Having both eaten and made it, we speak from tried experience as to its merits. Remove all hairy achenes from inside of hep with fine steel crochet hook, beat the heps to a pulp, to which add three times its own weight of sugar. Preserve in the usual way over a slow fire. When cold, it is an ambrosial confection. A very favourite dish at children's suppers abroad is Rose-hep Cream. Take the boiled pulp of heps, well sweeten and whisk with white of eggs to a perfectly stiff snow. Another very good confection is Rose-hep Jelly, made after the fashion of other fruit jellies, but with the addition of a squeeze of lemon and a small wine-glassful of port wine. Indeed many are the uses to which rose-pulp may be applied. To those who are acquainted with certain districts of South Germany the street cry of "Haage-muss!" "Frisch Haage-muss!" heard in the late autumn and early winter days must be very familiar, and many, we are sure, like ourselves, must deplore the obstinate neglect of this delightful item of our wasted wayside wealth.

But "far-fetched fowls have (alas!) ever the finest feathers"; and we fear that the fable of the peasant, who paid its weight in gold pieces for a cured ham in a distant grocer's shop, whilst his own sty held a fat bacon pig, will always find its parallel in all times and places.

Nevertheless, we conclude our paper on the Wasted Wealth of our Waysides by exhorting all unbelievers in its value, to "read us and be not wroth, for we speak nothing but the troth."

The following pages are entirely the work of girls, both as to letterpress and illustrations. "Our Readers' Own Realm" appears twice a year, and has been started to give girls an opportunity of putting their work to the test of public and editorial criticism.

THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

ALICE LLOYD.

Whose wonderful portraits of animals have been awarded the First Prize in the Photographic Competition.

THE BEST SHORT STORY.

Founded on Miss Brickdale's picture, "The Cunning Skill to Break a Heart."

MISS BRICKDALE'S picture evidently appealed very strongly to the imagination of our readers, with the result that we have had more stories than have ever before been sent in for competition. The task of reading this mass of MSS. has been tremendous, but the interest aroused in following the work of our enthusiastic competitors, who approached the theme of "The Cunning Skill to Break a Heart" from so many points of view, has more than compensated for the prolonged labour entailed. The chief prize has been won by a story which secured first place for the brilliancy of its style; while the second prize (which goes to far-off Demerara) is won for the originality and power of its plot. Beyond these, however, there are three stories which are too good to be passed over, and to these extra prizes have been awarded. Evelyn Simms was specially successful in creating an atmosphere of old history.

The girls who take lower places should not be discouraged. They sent in a great many stories of considerable merit; in many cases they have failed because of the limitations of the set subject; left free to choose their own plot and period they would have written stories in every way creditable.

First Class for Girls under Twenty-Five.

First Prize, value 10s. 6d.

ETHEL M. RICKARD (aged 20),
9, High Street, Ryde, I. of W.

Second, 5s.

VIOLET LEGGE,
71, Murray Street, Georgetown,
Demerara, B. G.

Extra Prizes.—EVELYN SIMMS, The Grove, Norton, Stourbridge, Worcs.; INA MARJORIE RICE LYSTER, Rue du Châtelain, 48, Avenue Louise, Brussels, Belgium; ANNIE LATHAM MCCLURE, Springfield, Inverness.

Second Class for Girls under Sixteen.

First, 10s. 6d.,

GLADYS PARRISH (aged 14),
Mortimer House,
Egerton Gardens, S.W.

Second, 5s.,

FLORA SIDNEY WOOLF (aged 15),
Lexham, Colinette Road,
Putney.

Extra Prize,

GLADYS DAUBENY,
Tatchley House, Prestbury,
Cheltenham.

GLADYS PARRISH.
1st Prize, Story, 2nd Class.

EVELYN SIMMS.
Extra Prize, Story, 1st Class.

GLADYS DAUBENY.
Extra Prize, Story, 2nd Class.

ISABEL POCOCK.
1st Prize, Drawing, 1st Class.

BEATRICE ARTHUR.
2nd Prize, Drawing, 1st Class.

EIRENE C. CHAMBERLAYNE.
1st Prize, Drawing, 2nd Class,

AGNES M. STERRY.
2nd Prize, Photograph, 1st Class.

C. GWEN E. ERSKINE.
Extra Prize, Letter, 1st Class.

ISABEL M. BRENNAND.
Extra Prize, Letter, 1st Class.

MAGGIE HERVEY.
1st Prize, Letter, 2nd Class.

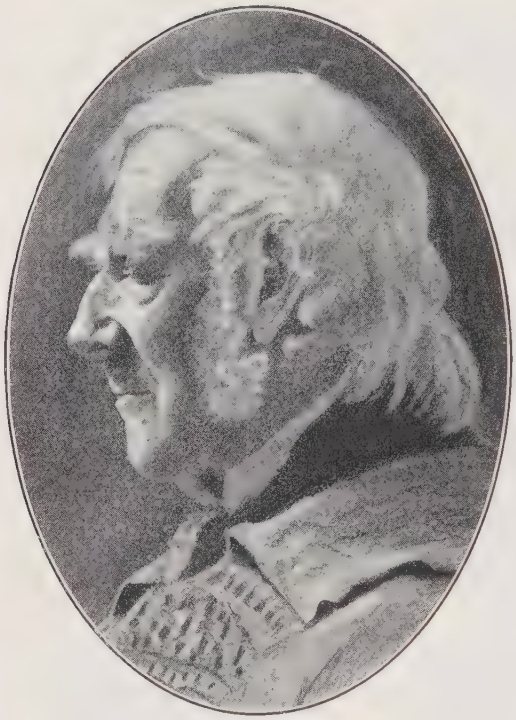
MABEL SOUTH.
2nd Prize, Letter, 2nd Class.

NANCY PEARSON.
1st Prize, Joke 1st Class.

ADELAIDE JEPHSON.
2nd Prize, Joke, 1st Class.

NITA HOWEY.
2nd Prize, Joke 2nd Class.

EDITHA BLAIKLEY.
1st Prize, Joke, 2nd Class.



A STUDY.

By BEATRICE ARTHUR (aged 17).

Awarded the Second Prize in the First Class.

THE BEST ORIGINAL DRAWING.

The merit of the work sent in for competition in this class is very high. Indeed, so good is some of the work that we look forward to the time when we shall be able to welcome to places on our ordinary staff some of the girls who are working so hard to qualify themselves as serious workers. The pen-and-ink drawing by Isabel Pocock is well conceived and delicately executed; while the portrait of an old man by Beatrice Arthur shows considerable strength. The work of all the Diploma winners is very good. In some cases we may be able to reproduce their work in future numbers of the magazine.

In the second class the work generally is not so good as it has sometimes been, although in a few cases great promise is shown. The study of a horse's head, by Eirene C. Chamberlayne, is very good. The second prize has been awarded to a little girl of ten, Amy G. Gostenhofer, for a pencil drawing of a dog's head. The funny cats in the "gym," by Dollie Phillips, are clever.

First Class, for Girls under Twenty-Five.

First, 10s. 6d.,

ISABEL POCOCK (aged 18),
66, St. Ann's Hill,
Wandsworth, S.W.

Second, 5s.,

BEATRICE ARTHUR (aged 17),
Belmont, Bushey,
Herts.

Second Class, for Girls under Sixteen.

First, 10s. 6d.,

EIRENE C. CHAMBERLAYNE (aged 15),
Witherley Hall,
Atherstone.

Second, 5s.

AMY G. GOSTENHOFER (aged 10),
South Alton, Rose Mount,
Oxton, Birkenhead.

Extra Prize,

DOROTHY M. BINGHAM STEVENS,
Darenth Vicarage,
Dartford, Kent.

THE BEST ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPHS.

This has been a delightful competition, giving the most genuine pleasure to the judge. The advice given in a recent article by Miss Maude Craigie Halkett on the photographing of animals has evidently been useful to many of the competitors. We must here specially commend to them the hints about suitable backgrounds; many of the photographs of pets would have been improved if they had not been taken with a fussy background. Alice Lloyd's photograph of a kitten is a gem of simplicity and truth, and the collie dog and snail by Agnes Mary Sterry is excellent for pose and expression.

First Class for Girls under Twenty-Five.

First prize, value 10s. 6d.,

ALICE LLOYD,
8, Westwood Park, Forest Hill, S.E.

Second prize, value 5s.,

AGNES MARY STERRY,
Redlands, Eastwood Road, Redhill.

Second Class for Girls under Sixteen.

First prize, value 10s. 6d.,

MAY HUGHES,
Dalchoolin, Craigavan, Co. Down, Ireland.

Second prize, value 5s.,

LAURA HELENA BARBARA BURKE,
44, Bramham Gardens, London.

MAY HUGHES.

Whose animal photograph secured her the First Prize in the Second Class of the Photograph Competition.

LETTER TO A FRIEND ABOUT "THE GIRL'S REALM."

THE Editor has to acknowledge the debt he owes to the girls who have written the great number of most interesting letters sent in this competition. From them he has been able to learn much about the opinions and impressions, the aims and ideas, of his readers, which is invaluable in his task. It would be churlish not to acknowledge the many flattering things which have been said about the magazine, but what has been so admirable about these criticisms has been the independent judgment shown by our readers. The praise — and who ever before received so much kindly flattery,— has been very heartening; on the other hand, the outspoken judgments have been most helpful. As a slight mark of appreciation the Editor has added five extra prizes (to consist of original drawings of illustrations which have appeared in the magazine), to girls who have written good letters.

First Class for Girls under Twenty-Five.

First, 10s. 6d.
The HON. LILIAN HENNIKER (aged 21),
24, Graham Street, Eaton Terrace, London, S.W.

Second, 5s. MURIEL BECKETT,
Corbar Hall, Buxton, Derbyshire.

THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.
By FRIEDA R. FLIGHT (aged 17).
Awarded a Diploma in the First Class.

Extra prizes.—C. GWENDOLINE E. ERSKINE, 25, Church Street, Kensington, W.; ISABEL MARY BRENNAND, Baltonsborough, near Glastonbury; ANNIE LATHAM MCCLURE, Springfield, Inverness; HONOR BATCHELOR, 7, Lansdowne Place, Blackheath, S.E.

EURYDICE.

Eurydice, the wife of Orpheus, was stung by a serpent whilst stooping to pick a flower. She died and went to Hades, where Orpheus afterwards sought her.

By OLIVETTE N. NORTON (aged 18).
Awarded a Diploma in the First Class.

Second Class for Girls under Sixteen.

First, 10s. 6d.
MAGGIE HERVEY (aged 13),
Shorley Rectory, Ipswich.

Second, 5s.
MABEL SOUTH (aged 15), c/o Miss Millner,
34, Brook Street, Holborn, W.C.

Extra prize.
ETHEL MARY TILL (aged 15),
The Great House, Caerwent, Chepstow.

THE ILLUSTRATED JOKE.

This Competition was kindly judged by Miss Hilda Cowham.

IT will be remembered that in this competition we asked for the best sketch for an illustrated joke. The joke was not necessarily to be original, but the sketch was to be. The competition was not intended to be a test of drawing but to bring out humorous ideas. With great kindness Miss Hilda Cowham, the well-known humorous artist, acted as judge.

First Class for Girls under Twenty-Five.

First prize, value 10s. 6d.
NANCY PEARSON (aged 18),
Balgray, Harley Road, Hampstead, London, N.W.

Second prize, 5s.
ADELAIDE J. JEPHSON (aged 17½),
Glenorchy, North Berwick, N.B.

Second Class for Girls under Sixteen.

First prize, 10s. 6d.
EDITHA BLAIKLEY, 10, Highbury Hill, N.

Second prize, 5s.
NITA M. HOWEY, The Grange, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

THE CUNNING SKILL TO BREAK A HEART.

PRIZE STORY.

By ETHEL M. RICKARD (aged 20).

"'Tis a pretty enough game," remarked Justina, past-mistress of the gentle art of flirting, "but the girl who can play it really well is born, not made."

She was sitting on the floor in a white, childish heap, with chin propped on hand and eyes full of dreams. At sight of her a casual observer would have said: "There is a beautiful grown-up child building air-castles."

"What, then, are the qualifications?" inquired her companion.

The far-away eyes touched earth with a flash as their owner answered quickly—

"Nerve, practised skill, ready wit and the stealth of a hunter."

"In fact everything but a heart," suggested the companion, dryly.

"AM I BEING PHOTOGRAPHED?"

By ALICE LLOYD (aged 21).

Awarded First Prize in the First Class Photo. Competition.

A COUNTRY IDYLL.

By L. H. B. BURKE (aged 14).

Awarded Second Prize in the Second Class Photo. Competition.

Justina raised one eyebrow.

"Well, no," she reflected, "when I come to think of it, I find a heart is absolutely necessary; but it must be of feather-weight, elusive, just enough to bring to the surface when a man searches your eyes to find it; but never tender enough to ache, my dear, nor heavy enough to break."

"Justina, you are cruel," said the other breathlessly, "how many hearts have you broken this summer, pray?"

Justina's teeth gleamed wickedly as she held out a slim, white wrist encircled by a bangle many charmed.

"There are the tokens—count!"

"Six little gold hearts," murmured her companion. "But here is a space without one. Does that mean a stolen heart returned to its owner?"

"No, I think that is waiting for Number Seven," replied Justina the flirt.

* * * *

Number Seven appeared towards the end of the summer. He was a scholar and a recluse, big of stature, big of brain, big of heart. As he entered the room the huntress in Justina, ever alert, whispered, "Yon's a man, go trap him!"

Yet her victim saw only a tender slip of a girl with an exquisite face, fingering, dreamy-eyed, a bangle on her wrist.

He sat next her at supper, scanning silently the while her profile, the little tip-tilted nose, the disdainful chin, the mobile mouth.

"Here's a woman to love," he thought, "and to woo and win," he added, when at last she had turned to him and talked, as only Justina, the flirt, could talk.

And she, in her turn, by quick, almost imperceptible glances, took this man's measure and pronounced him what he was—a big, learned, tender-hearted boy, with rather less than the average boy's worldly wisdom.

"I will make this big bear dance," thought Justina.

But her big bear, she found, was not always so docile.

One night they walked together in the garden and he examined, quite casually, the bangle on her wrist.

"They tell me that you have broken six men's hearts

A GROUP OF FRIENDS.

By MAY HUGHES (aged 15).

Awarded First Prize in the Second Class Photo. Competition.

this year and that mine is to be the seventh," he said abruptly. "Is it true?"

Here was a test for the nerve and skill of the flirt who was born, not made.

Justina looked up at him with all her elusive, feather-weight heart shining through a mist of tears.

"Do *you* believe it?" she asked.

He searched her eyes for what seemed a long, long minute, and thought he probed her very soul, though in truth he scarce saw further than the tears.

"No," he said at last under his breath.

"Trapped!" whispered in triumph Justina the flirt. Yet her victim saw only a girl with eyes downcast and a mouth wavering in a soft, breathless tremor.

* * * *

Next day they met on a little bridge which spanned a woodland stream just at the end of the village.

She leant over the rail and gazed at the water in maiden meditation.

He leant over the rail and gazed at—her—in reverent contemplation.

Somewhere in the thicket behind him, and for his special benefit, a bird sang lustily "Beware, she is fooling thee," but, alas, to deaf ears. The memory of last night was strong upon him, and he made his avowal, all his clean, strong soul in his eyes.

"I love you, dear, I love you. My heart is in your hands to do with as you will."

Justina lifted indifferent eyes beneath eyebrows faintly puzzled. For her the game was won last night, and had lost now its zest.

"What are hearts for, but to play with?" she said, and swept by him, a stately princess, eyes lowered, chin tilted, mouth, a cruel little scarlet line.

Later, there dangled from her bracelet a seventh golden witness to her "cunning skill to break a heart."

THE CUNNING SKILL TO BREAK A HEART.

PRIZE STORY.

By GLADYS PARRISH (aged 14½).

MARION had come from town! An unimportant thing to many, but to Hugh Corbett it meant all the world. He met her in a lane one day—a dainty figure in white with a shady hat trimmed with buttercups. She greeted him very kindly, and allowed him to escort her home.

Hugh returned, treading on air. He had loved her in his honest, whole-hearted way, ever since their first meeting a year ago. He, the simple young squire, who had hitherto cared only for hunting and country sports, now let the hounds go off without him, while he roamed the lanes hoping for a glimpse of Marion.

Yet, despite all his efforts, he saw her but rarely, till one day a little accident changed the whole course of things. A shower on a sunny day found them both at a distance from her home, and they met at the gates of Corbett Hall.

Hugh begged her to take shelter in his house while the rain lasted, and to this she consented. They sat by the great open fireplace in the hall, Marion imparting many delightful confidences, to which Hugh listened enraptured.

When the shower was over, the two went out into the quaint, old-fashioned garden, where the raindrops glistened on the grass, and weighed down the flowers, and there the man poured out his whole history to the girl—his sorrows and joys and interests—all in his heart save that thing that was nearest and dearest to him—his love for her. They met often after that. There were long walks in the lanes and meadows, and a few starlit evenings in the woods. He was happy and confident that spring, poor honest Hugh!

The spring passed—that glorious spring that should never have ended! Summer came; Marion was about to leave for town for the season, and still the great question had not been asked! About this time there was a coldness in Marion's manner that alarmed Hugh. At the midsummer dance she danced but once with him, and was more distant than she had ever been. Full of misgivings, Hugh followed her, as she went

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM: "You have but slumber'd here, while these visions did appear."

By ISABEL POCOCK (aged 18).

Awarded First Prize in the First Class Drawing Competition.

A CHILDREN'S PARTY.

KIND HOSTESS (to dejected little boy): "Now Tommy, come along and join in the game!—Mary's going to be a canary, and Bertie's a giraffe—now what are you going to be?"
TOMMY: "Well, I think I'm going to be *sick!*"

By NANCY PEARSON (aged 18).

Awarded First Prize in First Class Joke Competition.

home, and caught her up at the little bridge in the wood, her pale dress gleaming in the gathering twilight.

"Marion!" he called, "Marion!"

She turned; in the dim light he saw the change in her face, and his heart beat faster and faster.

"When are you leaving?" he asked.

"To-morrow."

"To-morrow!" echoed Hugh. Then he blurted out: "I cannot let you leave without telling you that—that—you are all the world to me, and that I love you!" He ceased abruptly, for her eyes were steely, her lips scornful. A cold hand seemed to clutch at his heart. With a fresh effort he cried imploringly: "I love you, Marion, tell me you love me a little—a little!"

Marion stood quite still, smiling

"You are nothing whatever to me," she said.

The man staggered back.

"Nothing to you! Yet—yet you showed me—you gave me every encouragement——"

She laughed outright.

"Did you think so?" she said. She stretched out her hand. "I am going to-morrow, Mr. Corbett," she said; "I will say good-bye now—for ever; I am never coming back—it is too dull here, after town. But the summer has been pleasant, for you gave me something to do."

She smiled again; and as Hugh, crushed, desperate, overlooked her outstretched hand, she walked away lightly, holding up her dainty skirts.

Still smiling, she stepped off the bridge, well-pleased at her cunning skill in breaking hearts.

FAR END LANE, HONLEY: A SKETCH.

By GERTRUDE DEARNLEY (aged 17).

Awarded a Diploma in the First Class Drawing Competition.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

TEACHER. "Why Ethel, what is the matter?"
ETHEL: "Bobby had a dough-nut, and he said he'd give me the hole, and when he ate it the hole went, so I haven't had none!"

By EDITHA BLAIKLEY (aged 15).

Awarded First Prize in Second Class Joke Competition.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND ABOUT "THE GIRL'S REALM."

PRIZE LETTER.

By the Honble. LILIAN HENNIKER (aged 21).

DEAREST MARGERY,—Have you seen "THE GIRL'S REALM"? I have a copy of the July Number on the table beside me as I write. It is a Perfect Magazine. In it the lover of laughter may find fun—the ambitious the way to fame—the earnest girl a work to do for other girls.

It is rightly named "THE GIRL'S REALM." Within its pretty covers is found everything that could interest the most versatile of girls Let me enumerate some of the attractions of the July Number.

THE GIRL'S REALM has the most unique of all articles about the "Coronation" of King Edward VII. The story of the little lords and ladies of England enchant the maiden's heart. Their portraits fascinate the maiden's eyes. It would be an unnatural girl who did not love the children! And how our hearts ache for the little ones left desolate!

Then there is that delightful story, "The Daughters of a Genius." With what interest one follows the careers of each one of Mrs. De Horne Vaizey's "living" heroines! For my part "Theo's" success or failure is of intense importance to me. I hope, or fear (as the case may be) for my own possibilities.

There is a short story also about "Victoria the Good," the example of a noble girlhood and womanhood.

In this number an artistic girl may

A FACT.

OWNER OF A COW (horrified): "But goodness me, Pat, *one* cow couldn't eat a ton of hay a day!"
PAT: "For sure and it couldn't, your honour, but then there's the night!"

By ADELAIDE JEPHSON (aged 17).

Awarded Second Prize in the First Class Joke Competition.

A STUDY FROM LIFE.
By EDITH M. BROMHALL
(aged 18).
Awarded a Diploma in the First Class Drawing Competition.

imagine herself at the Academy, gazing at the pictures most attractive to her. This well-illustrated article is written by Miss Alice Corkran — a name to conjure with among all readers of THE GIRL'S REALM and all members of the Girl's Realm Guild, and indeed among girls all over the world. She is a friend worth having, indeed, to every thoughtful girl. And what can I say of the Girl's Realm Guild? I can only say, "Do join!" Girls that are lonely and sad, "Do join!" The sympathy and love that will reach you cannot be measured! Girls who are weary of nothing to do, "Do join!" There is work for heart and hand for you! Poor girls, "Do join!" For the members' riches are your joint treasure! Girls, high and low, rich and poor, "Do join!" If only to link yourself in spirit to the spirit of the wonder-working girls of the Guild!

I feel I have not mentioned half the attractions of THE GIRL'S REALM. I have said nothing about its splendid Literary Competitions or its "Children's Corner"—oh, a hundred other interesting things! But I felt I should be but a poor friend to you, Margery, if I did not introduce you to the Magazine that has whiled away so many happy hours, and made me more worthy of your friendship.

PRIZE LETTER.

By MURIEL BECKETT (aged 18).

Letter from MISS CLARA FRIVOL *to her friend, one* MISS MINERVA SHARPE.

LIGHTSUM HALL, *June 16th.*

DEAREST MINERVA.—Many thanks for your letter—but why ask me? My advice has only been taken twice in my whole life, and I have only two real enemies in the world. The conclusion is obvious. Consequently when I received your note yesterday afternoon, asking my advice as to what magazine you should now subscribe to, seeing that you are tired of the "Monthly Martin," I was instantly thrown into the deepest despair.

I sat in the morning-room, your letter in my hand, a frown upon my brow, foreseeing nothing less than the eternal severance of our long friendship—three months if it is a day! But it is always darkest before dawn, and at that moment Jane, our maid, entered, the July number of THE GIRL'S REALM in her hand. "Eureka!" cried I. My difficulty was solved. No longer need I fear the severance of our friendship.

I would advise my dearest Minerva to take THE GIRL'S REALM. To explain more fully, my dearest friend, this magazine, which is still in the first bloom of its youth—I wax poetical in my enthusiasm—is without exception the best, the most interesting, the most diverting, the most instructive—but there! I know no better way of commending it to your notice than by giving you a true and particular account of the July number, which lies at this moment at my elbow.

To begin with the features I like best; there is a tale by Mrs. Stepney Rawson, entitled "In the Hour of High Festival," very amusing and interesting, all about Queen Victoria's Coronation. There is also an account of the Enthronement of the King of Spain, and a third long instalment of a serial tale, by Mrs. De Horne Vaizey, called "The Daughters of a Genius." The Literary Page, "On Some French Books" suitable for girls, to my mind might easily have been omitted, but will doubtless commend itself to your lofty intellect. Being perfectly insane on the subject of croquet, you will also appreciate the article on "Golf-croquet," which I think a "soft" game, and not to be compared with hockey and lawn tennis. There are also several pages devoted to an account of the doings of the "Girl's Realm" Guild. I have not joined it yet, but I am sure you will agree with me that to read of girls banding themselves together for the good of others less fortunate than themselves is both interesting and profitable.

An article on "School Girls' Friendships" I thoroughly enjoyed; it is most cunningly illustrated by Hilda Cowham.

Then there is a beautifully illustrated account of pictures concerning "Girl-life in the Royal Academy," another article on "Infants at the Coronation," a puzzle picture, a—but space will not allow me to write any more. Only get the number for yourself, and I venture to prophecy that from that time forward you will be a regular subscriber.

Good-bye, dear old chum. I never wrote such a long letter before in my life, and it will take a square yard of pumice stone to get the ink off my fingers.

Affectionately yours,

CLARA.

A TYPICAL ENGLISH GIRL.
By SYBIL HUTCHINSON
(aged 21).
Awarded a Diploma in the First Class Drawing Competition.

OUR ROLL OF HONOUR.

STORY COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Ethel Isabella Gore Davids
Ethel Cholmondeley-Brawn
Rose H. Monk
Mary P. Fortune
Eva Horton Goodman
May H. Timms
Helen K. Watts
May Coley
Alice Grant Rosman
Annie Ruth Troward
Isabelle Swinscow
Cecily M. Fryer
Hetta Pepper
Alice Maud Chestnutt
Maud Mary Lyne
Evelyn Mary Kent
The Hon. Lilian Henniker
Dorothy Owen
Eleanor Muriel Prince
Dorothy Field
Dorothy Rolfe
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Agnes May Chaffey
Mary T. de Lautour

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Phyllis Carr
Honor Batchelor
Annette Eleanor Chauntrell
Lucy Sargent
Amy Nankivell
Esther G. Bell
Clare Noëlle Walker
Rika Gasteiger
Nannie Sanderson
Marjory M. Rimmer
Kathleen Elizabeth Board
Winifred Clarissa Shepheard
Nina M. Cook
Edith Mary Pippet
Mary Chadwick
Winifred Methley
Isabel Lilian Buckingham
Eleanor Mary Plumer
Norah Ambrose
Tina Gray
Augusta B. Hopkins
Edith Mary Chettle
Ida Wild

OUR ROLL OF HONOUR.—*continued.*

STORY COMPETITION.—MENTION.

Aileen L. Evans
May Donley
Dorothy Agnes Clapham
Grace Lawrence
Margaret K. S. Edwards
Ruth Bickersteth
Blanche Agnes Tracy
Dorothy C. Langley
Kizzie Strutt Proctor
Emily Smart
Olive E. Rayner
Eleanor Silsby
Catherine Trousdell
Kathleen Jessie Bayliss
Ida Hony
Vera Geraldine Blackstone
Gertrude Pitt
Nellie Cotton
Gertrude Mary Lumbers
Leila Gibson
L. Faith M. S. Fish
Gertrude E. Carver
Emily Beatrice Dawson
Ethel Adams
Ida B. Leggatt
Ethel G. Smith
Dora Alice King
Margaret Knight North
Agnes Lilian Shields
Jessie Grace Cameron
C. Gwendoline E. Erskine
Lily Evatt

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Ariadne Dunderdale
Sheila Kaye-Smith
Kitty S. Smith
Mary Winifred Mogg
The Lady Edith Ogilvy
Violet Dora Alice Maxwell
Linda Lindemann
Dorothea M. Dexter
May Rossie-Brown

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Hylda Dale
Christine Mary Hitchin
Molly Miller
Lucy Alger
Edna Smallwood
Violet Nesbitt-Kemp
Kathleen Mary E. Smith
Doreen Banks
Maud F. Smith
Minnie Katherine Bryant
Muriel A. Bedson
Mabel Tumpowsky
Beryl I. Carter
Emmie Barstow
Nina Lewis
Elsie C. Porter
Dorothy Humphreys
Emily A. Ferris
Nora H. M. Yonge
Marjory Bruce Murray
Dolza Rothenheim
Mabel South

DRAWING COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Victoria Ingram-Cotton
Olivette M. Norton
Agnes Richardson
Agnes de Polignac
Frieda R. Flight
Edith Mary Bromhall
Sybil Hutchinson
Muriel Dorothea Fountain
Nelly Lammens
Gertrude Dearnley
Ella Fountain Mangin
Beatrice Maria Stephens
Maud Centaro
Violet C. P. Round
Rachel Duberly
Dorothy Smith
Ellen Juliet Paul
Inez Topham
Ethel Lavinia Tanner
Mabel Alice Banks
Eva Elbourne Barrett
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Daisy Bateman
F. Eugenidi

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Mabel Edith Hanson
Dorothy Scrimgeour
Mary Agnes Massie
The Countess Stephanie Bethlen
Edith Marion Robinson
Theresa Butchart
G. Evelyn L. Dalrymple
Edith Charlotte Adams
Janet Oram
Gladys Haslewood
Kathleen Brooke
Mary McCance
Margaret Waterston
Faith Lucas
Annie M. Hopkins
Maud M. Hanson
Agnes Lilian Shields

MENTION.

Sylvia Tatham
E. Proby Adams
Coral Hubbuck
Winifred Le Conteur
Ruth Bickersteth
Charlotte Amy Clarke
Mary C. Annzella Page
Margaret Oxley
Elfreda Oldham
H. Regina Middleton
Dorothy Shoobert
Phyllis Helen Carr
Deborah Hart
Mabel Greenwood
Margaret Editha Gurney
Margaret M. Lovett
Daisy M. Holyoake
Kathleen May Pearson
The Hon. Flora Fitzmaurice Deane Morgan
Edith Chettle
Gladys J. Kemp
Olive Buchanan Hoare
Nancy Pearson
Ina Marjorie Rice Lyster
Anida Robinson
Edyth Ball
Madeleine Agnes Kent
Norah H. Taylor
Ada Mary Whitehead
Dorothy Daniell
Annie Chassar Dallas
Isabel Brennand
A. C. de Lautour
Elise Landstone
Florence Mary Watson
Ethel Guest
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Winifred Phillips
Mariella Holenia
Anna Holenia
Victoria Beresford
Lucy E. B. Maye
A. Lilian King
Pansy Martin
Lucy Brockie
Ida Hony
Kathleen Jessie Bayliss
Louise Maude Franklin
Ethel Chubb
Olivia Mary G. Salt
Clara H. Sidney Woolf
Ina Jephson
Mary K. Southwell Keely
Florence Mary Clark
Hilda Maud Coley
Edith Mary Pippet
Elizabeth C. M. Bennett

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Dorothy Frances Phillips
Dorothea M. Dexter
Cecilia Janet Dibben
Dorothy Fuller
Margaret Walker
Muriel Gadsdon
Eleanor Foster
Helen Dora Robinson
Violet Nesbitt Kemp
Joyce Crawford

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Phyllis Devereux Winder
Winifred Harman
Ethel Eleanor Wade
Edith May Stevenson
Dorothy Sophia Washbourne
Minnie Katherine Bryant
Amy McDermott
Elsie M. Potter
Hilda Alice Martin
Maggie Hervey
Lorna L. Lawrence
Kathleen Robinson Cuff
The Countess Marie Anne O'Donell
Cecilia F. Butler
Violet Gordon
Alma Gordon
Florence Maud Blaikley
Margery Holmes
Dorothy Home Atkinson
Madge Kirk Child
Editha Leighton Blaikley
Margaret Ellison Voelcker
Dorothy Purchas
Hilda M. Harris
Demetra P. Pikionis
Hilda Wyatt
Phyllis Kelaart
Sybil Mary Schreiber
Emily Ferris
Dorothy Fuller
Margaret Hodgson
Gertrude Frances Skipton
Mildred E. Hilditch

ANIMAL PHOTOGRAPH COMPETITION.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Marjory L. Robinson
Emily Beatrice Dawson
Mary T. de Lautour
Rachel Duberly
C. Gwendoline Erskine
Winifred M. C. Daniell
Daisy Pearson
Edith Mary Seale
Daisy M. Johnson
Rita B. Mosely
Marjory M. Taylor

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Lucy Brockie
Dulcie Worthington
Gwendoline Violet G. Godfrey
Norah Brewer
Cicely Joan Bacon
Edith Bell
Vera Scott
Ellen Mary Failes
Mildred King Houston
Kathleen Code
Dora W. Key
Avens Brooke
Norah Constance Horn
Noël Lacy
Gertrude Dearnley
Effie Gladys Herbert
Olive Covell
Eleanor Code
A. Winifred Hopton
Mary Gray-Buchanan
Norah H. Taylor
Violet A. L. Hadden
Ella Russell
E. Kate Westrup

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Violet Gordon
Alma Gordon
Cicely Joan Kennaway
Irene Gladys Spokes
Gwendolen English

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Gladys Hawkins
Nadine Erskine
Primrose Barstow
Cecilia F. Butler
Marjorie Northover
V. Mary Marshall
Mildred V. Hilditch
Editha Ivy Pigott

LETTER TO A FRIEND ABOUT "THE GIRL'S REALM."—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Constance Marion Johnson
Gwendoline Violet G. Godfrey
Winifred Methley
Mary Paterson Fortune
Winifred Clarissa Shepheard
Kathleen Jessie Bayliss
Theodora Stanley Malden
Constance Griffin Clark
Ethel Gertrude Smith
Winifred Spalding
Dorothy Field
Lily Caroline Wilson
Mary C. Annzella Page
Janet Adams
Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Marion Monson
Lily Evatt
Edith W. Green
Annie E. L. Trembath
Gertrude Dearnley
Esther G. Bell
Madeleine Agnes Kent
Hilda Corbey
Aileen L. Evans
Mary Millicent Read
Dorothy Owen

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Natalie Ballon
Ethel Adams
Dora A. King
Nella Adeline Praill
Elsie B. Fletcher
Margaret J. Gribble
Gertrude Mary Lumbers
Muriel Marian Hobbs
Madeleine Willison
Una Mary Truman
Eveline Child
Marjorie Dunkerley
Hester S. Winder
Dora Marcuson
Winifred S. West
Ethel Ollercushaw
Edyth Ball
Ethel Carleton Williams
Nan Fussell
Rachel Duberly
Edith M. Chettle
Agnes Hodgkinson
Ethel E. S. Coppen
Amy N. Nankivell
Isabel Griffith
Rose Edith Sarll
Daisie Mojon
Evelyn Simms
Maud Mary Lyne
Myra Gossip
Isabella Delorme
Dora W. Key
Victoria Beresford
Marjory L. Robinson
Florence Piercy Jones
Ella Fountaine Mangin
Iva Mary Hill

Second Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Ellen O'Neil
Violet Nesbitt Kemp
Lilian Jeanie Connell
Dorothy H. Bates
Dorothy Humphreys
Emily Ferris
Phyllis Woodham Smith
Dorothy Dickman
Muriel Humphreys
Muriel A. Bedson

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Nadine Erskine
Gladys M. Cook
Cecilia F. Butler
Dorothy E. McCaig
Kathleen F. Fetherstonhaugh
Hilda A. Martin
Gwendoline Louise Edwards

ILLUSTRATED JOKE.—First Class.

DIPLOMAS.

Kathleen Jessie Bayliss
Daisy Bateman

HONOURABLE MENTION.

Dora Nesbitt Kemp
Rose Edith Sarll
Dorothy Daniell
Ina Jephson
Faith Lucas
Elsie Morton
Annie M. Hopkins
Jessie Mason
The Hon. Flora Fitzmaurice Deane Morgan
Dorothy More
Mabel Garthwaite
Ruth J. Payn Le Sueur
Maude M. Hanson

Second Class.

Ethel Eleanor Wade
Dorothea M. Dexter
Ruth Madeline Hutchings
Edith Powys Stone
Dorothy Home Atkinson
Joyce Crawford

How I can Earn a Living.

JOURNALISM AS AN OCCUPATION FOR GIRLS.

By FRANCES H. LOW.

ONE of the most difficult and important things in the world for a girl who must be self-dependent is the right choice of an employment. As for many years I have been interested in the occupations of women and girls, and have carefully studied and investigated the various questions connected therewith, and in addition am myself a *true* bread-winner, the Editor of THE GIRL'S REALM, in the belief that my advice will be of value to those of his readers who must also become breadwinners, has asked me to take charge of a page which will be devoted to this important subject. You will have noticed that I have used the words "true breadwinner," and may be somewhat puzzled as to what I mean by the word "true." It is best for me to frankly explain what I mean, even if in doing so I upset some ideas and perhaps even convictions that you hold, probably without having thought very much about the subject. Now, as you know, every civilised community or State is made up of Homes, and its well-being largely depends on the kind of home maintained. John Bright said that you must judge the prosperity of a country, not by the amount of wealth in it, or the number of magnificent public buildings, or the number of philanthropic institutions, or the greatness of its art and literature, but by the number of its happy modest homes. Till within a few years ago this maxim has always been a supreme article of faith with the women of this land, and the words English Home stood, as you know, as the symbol for the perfection of sweetness, cleanliness and comfort. To make home lovely, a worthy environment for budding minds and souls, was the pride and pleasure of women in all ranks, and all the delicate arts, now almost lost, such as that of fine lace mending, the care of china and glass, and linen, weaving, herb simples, perfume extracting, and so forth, far more subtle and interesting than the work of the typewriter, or the clerk or lady journalist, were practised with exquisite perfection by the most brilliant and accomplished women of the day. How nobly the work of bygone women was accomplished, those of us who have studied the making of England—to which women have contributed every whit as much as men—well know; and if for the moment we have lost our hold on the many arts and forms of knowledge that they possessed, it is, I am convinced, but temporarily, to be revived at no very distant period and diffused and practised more widely than ever. For Men must be the Money-Makers, Women the Home Makers, and Nature has endowed both with the requisite faculties. Man with bone, muscle, and fighting power; woman with capacity for detail, for healing, preserving and inspiring. I am afraid you will think all this a somewhat lengthy and dull way of impressing on you a truth of which I am solemnly convinced, that money-making by women is, and should be, *accidental*, and that the normal and true destiny of women and girls is not to fight, jostle and trample—for this is what you must do if you are going to fight the battle for existence, as men do—but to have happy leisure for self-culture, for rendering services to others, for becoming the star of the little circle gathered about them, whether as wives, mothers, sisters or daughters. There is another reason why no girl should become a money-maker, unless compelled by necessity to support herself, and this reason is that every single well-to-do girl in the labour market makes the struggle more cruel for her penniless sisters; she increases the over-supply and competition, and helps to lower salaries.

But there is an army of girls who must be self-dependent, and under the best of conditions their lives are anxious ones; they cannot have the rest and recreation that happier girls get, and they deserve all the help, all the kindness and consideration, and, in many cases, all the admiration that can be given them. At the present moment

The Attraction of Journalism

for the fairly well educated girl is very great, and the reason of this is not difficult to discover. It appears to promise a good deal of novelty and going about, is light and varied and easy in its nature, and as women's work goes, is decidedly fairly well paid. On account of its being easy to master and requiring less training than typewriting for instance, the field is already fairly well stocked, but the number of new journals that are perpetually being started gives the newcomer an excellent chance, and I can safely tell you that if you are content to earn £1 10s. to £2 a week, as so many women workers are, you are tolerably likely to secure this with patience and perseverance after two or three years. But first let me warn any girl who is highly educated and has delicate literary taste and a good knowledge of literature, and who cannot bear the thought of lowering her ideals, that she should avoid journalism. I have no hesitation in declaring that there is no place in our modern journalism for a cultured intellectual girl knowing and caring for the best in Art and Letters, and that all her delicate talent and perceptions are wholly thrown away—a drug in the market. Let her seek some other occupation by

which she can earn her bread and devote her spare time to her literary gifts and studies. Then as the years go by she may find her graceful literary essays or sketches recognised and rewarded; or she may have the fate of many of our most brilliant literary journalists, of finding in middle age that there is no demand for such delicate work as she can produce, no market for the only wares that she has to sell. If you want to succeed in journalism, you must give up all idea of doing what nine-tenths of you think you will be able to do admirably, viz., reviews, literary essays, miscellaneous sketches after the style of Lamb, graceful lyrics, etc. When you have got to the top of the tree you can indulge in this sort of pleasant journalism, but if you must make a steady income to keep you in bread and butter and shoes and shelter, you must go to work altogether differently. First let me suppose that you are the ordinary fairly well educated girl from the High School and can spell, put a dozen sentences together correctly, have a quick accurate eye and the average intelligence. This is quite sufficient equipment for ordinary journalism, and all the technical knowledge that you require you will soon learn with practice and familiarity.

How to Start on Journalism.

Let us come now to practical details. The first thing is to make up your mind what kind of journalism you are best fitted for, always being careful to choose the kind that is marketable. I have indicated to you what you must avoid, and I shall now briefly give you some notion of the branches in which there is most work. It is a capital thing to be an all-round journalist, able to describe a social event, such as a wedding or bazaar, or the minute details of fashionable dress, or the contents of West-End shops, or give an account of a movement or educational institution, or to sum up the leading points of a meeting or lecture; and at the same time to get yourself known to editors as an *Expert* on one or more subjects.

Now let this expert subject be concerned with what you yourself are most interested in and likely to do best. Your special subject may be needlework, plain dressmaking, advice on dress, household management and expenditure, gardening, sport, cookery, employments of women, care of children, travel. All these subjects are legitimate ones for study and treatment, and in due proportion are capable of proving useful forms of information for busy women. I advise you to avoid palmistry, handwriting, physiognomy and other similar trash; also advice on love affairs which are favourite columns in journals for maidservants and should not be handled by girls with sense and delicacy of mind. Then also I do not advise your undertaking columns dealing with the complexion, which more often than not involve a sad waste of time and money, or with medical matters which ought to be left to doctors. As for art and dramatic criticism, and books, there is this to be remembered: even the ladies' journals often prefer to employ men for these departments, for what reason I cannot tell you, but it is a fact; and moreover, as they are the "prizes of the profession," what most women prefer to do and think they can do, you would not find it easy to obtain this species of journalism unless you had influence with editors. Now the field for the practical subjects is a wide and fairly lucrative one, and as yet by no means overcrowded with specialists. Take for instance, simple home dressmaking, especially intended, not for the dressmaker, but for the woman with very small means, making her own and her little children's clothes. Now at present there is scarcely one of these columns that is of the smallest value to such a woman.

All the journals for the working woman, tradesman's wife and clerk's wife are filled week after week with senseless gossip about the tea-gown being shown at Messrs. So-and-So's West-End establishment, or the yachting dresses worn by the Duchess of This, or the Ascot gowns of the Countess of That. But before long some persons with common sense and good sense will start journals for the classes of women named above, full of all sorts of useful helpful information, and you who are expert by this time will be asked to contribute a column of practical use on simple home dressmaking, instructing the artisan's wife how to look, not fashionable, but fresh and attractive on the very small sum she can expend on clothes. You will show her in the simplest language and diagram how to cut down her last winter's dress and turn it into pretty little coats for her two little boys. Or perhaps you have studied the economy of the very modest household, or are an authority on the best means of furnishing a little home, or on the culture of the small London garden. But whether you prepare yourself for this new type of homely, useful journalism, or prefer catering for the wealthy and leisured, with dress or society functions, or sport, try and master your subject thoroughly, and at your earliest opportunity bring your special talent under the notice of some one likely to give you work. An article in an humble magazine will often help you very much. So from the very beginning *start specializing*. Next month I shall tell you how to procure "bread and butter" journalism. I shall also be very pleased to answer any questions and give any advice in my power. Will correspondents take a pseudonym, adding their real names and addresses?

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

E. M. D.—You are not sufficiently well educated for a High-School Teacher, and if you must begin to earn at once you could not be a Board School Teacher. I do not see how you could be a teacher of any kind unless you could devote the next three years to making yourself a cultured woman. Why do you not take up some practical employment? There is a good opening for laundry superintendents, and cook-housekeepers can always command a good salary. Could you devote three months to training and expend £20? Let me hear. Then I can advise you.

CLARISSA,—As your daughter is so young, she ought to take up some occupation of a more skilled and permanent nature than that of Secretary. This occupation is badly paid and most precarious and she will be no better off after ten years' experience. Is she fond of children? If so, why not send her to the Norland Institute and let her be trained as a child's nurse? All the aristocratic, Royal and well-to-do families are employing gentlewomen in their nurseries, and a thoroughly good departure this is, from every point of view.

MY CHAT WITH THE GIRL OF THE PERIOD.

By ALICE CORKRAN.

My Dear Girls,—The Coronation is an event of the past. The gilt coach that looked like a coach out of a fairy tale has gone back to whence it came. The cream-coloured horses with their trappings of crimson and gold, the grooms that led them, the King's watermen that preceded them, have all gone back—gone back to the land of Nowhere.

It has all been like a dream. The grey day, the crowds that gathered, the guns that boomed forth when the King set out, when the King reached Westminster Abbey, when the crown was placed on his head, and when he left the great church, are all a visionary remembrance. The lithe Highlanders marched bravely to the music of their bagpipes, the sturdy English soldiers marched as at duty's call, the Colonials in all the bravery of khaki and great shady soft hats, rode their magnificent horses. There was Lord Roberts carrying his stick of command; great, sombre Lord Kitchener, smileless while the multitude shouted his name, waved numberless handkerchiefs, tossed hats up in the air, seeming to see and to hear nothing, because of those other sights he had seen, those other sounds he had heard on battlefields. There were the Indians and Indian princes looking swarthy and serious in their dazzling costumes of azure and gold, of silver and dark crimson with their heavy turbans ablaze with jewels; they have all gone home over the sea to the land from whence comes the gold and the ivory, and in which great temples gleam in groves of mystic trees. All, all is finished. All we remember now are the two stately figures in the coach, symbols of England's mighty empire, and of that long descent of kings dating from the misty past. Still we seem to see the King with his jewelled crown on his head, the Queen beside him, a radiant vision of loveliness, bowing to right and left. The pale worn face of Edward VII. was as that of a man who had seen death, and who, turning away, hears the cries of his subjects vowing to him loyal love.

"I am glad that I saw it," said Caroline, who was with me and Mabel. A few minutes ago she had wished to leave her seat because the procession back from the Abbey was nearly two hours late. "It means so much," said Mabel, whose eyes were moist, "it means so much more than the crowning of a man. It is a symbol put upon his head signalling him out as the representative of all that England means and all that England is."

My two dear girls were again with me a few days later when we went to see the reception into London of the Boer Generals Botha, De Wet and Delarey. Not six months ago they were our enemies determined to die rather than surrender to our sway, and now a dense crowd was gathered to receive them. And when they came in sight what a cheer went up! It was the cheer of a nation doing homage to the might and valour of their opponents—the cheer of a nation extending to them the offer of fellowship. "You have fought well," it seemed to say, "you are brave men, be our friends as we shall be friends to you." I could not see them very well as they passed, but theirs seemed to me to be strong serious faces, and they appeared somewhat surprised at their reception.

"Strange that such a short time ago we and they should have been murdering each other," said Mabel.

"They have been beaten, but they have played their game well," said Caroline briskly. "I for one am ready to shake hands with them."

"Poor people, I wish we did not want so much to take their independence from them," said tender Mabel.

"Nonsense," said Caroline. "If the war had to be fought to-morrow again it would be fought, for English men and women would be ready to die if need be. There cannot be two rival races reigning in South Africa. It must be the Dutch or the English; let it be the English."

"So be it," said I, "and let England prove no harsh stepmother to her newly-found children."

And now, my dear girls, let us turn to that great problem of "Carinth's," and to which some of you have sent answers. You remember it, I am sure—how a young man was employed to find out the author of a crime, and in the course of his researches he gets engaged to a girl and trusts her implicitly. He tells her what he has been sent for. Judge of his horror—the girl is the culprit. "What is he to do?" asks "Carinth." "Ought the young man to denounce his betrothed and let her forfeit her life?" "No," writes Edna emphatically, "he ought to shield her. He should stand by her through thick and thin, and give up his post, marry her and go away to some colony where no one would know them.

"Ruby" says: "Affection should *not* precede justice. I do not want to seem cruel or unsympathetic in taking this view of the case, and I do realise, as far as an outsider can, what a shock it must be to the man, to find in the girl he loves the criminal he is tracking down. It seems to me that the man would do best to set the whole matter before his chief, telling him of his love for the girl, and throwing her on his mercy, which, it seems to me, he would readily grant."

"Asphodel" writes: "I was very much interested in the problem which 'Carinth' sent you, but in my judgment the case would only be probable in Russia, when the girl would be a Nihilist guilty of murdering some high official, and the young man one of the Government detectives. If he really loved his *fiancée*, people would say he ought to protect her at all costs. If, however, he holds to the theory of Lovelace, 'I could not love you, dear, so much, loved I not honour more,' the young man will do one of two things, either betray his betrothed to the authorities, or at the cost of his own success in life inform his chief that he knows who the culprit is, but will not reveal her identity, and then leave it in his hands as to whether he is to be dismissed or not."

"Charlotte" is dubious. I quote part of her letter. "'Carinth' has not told us the nature of the crime except that the punishment is of death. There are some crimes so hateful that the whole personality is permeated with the poison of the evil. But there are some that we feel are thrust upon a nature too weak to break through the coils of fate, except by violent means."

"Betty" thinks: "To denounce the girl is to deliver her over to the executioner, to shelter her is to betray his trust. I think that the man would get the girl out of the country and place her in safety. Then he would go to his chiefs and confess to them that he knew who the criminal was. He would refuse to give up the name, he would plead for the girl, putting her case honourably and squarely before his chiefs, and speaking for her as he would have spoken for himself. He would then rejoin the girl, perhaps he would marry her, but that is a secondary matter."

There are other answers to the problem. The one thing which constitutes the essence of the problem is, what shall the man do? He has obtained his information, it may be by her confidence or by that of another. Now to act on this would be contrary to honour, or, in other words, contrary to the laws of the game of life. He is therefore exactly in the position—to carry out the similitude of the game—of one who has obtained some advantage by a purely accidental act of confidence on the part of his adversary. He cannot act on that information. If he were playing at chess, for instance, and his adversary in moving had accidentally swept a valuable piece of his own from the board, it would be impossible to take advantage of that. In like manner, if the game were of cards, and the adversary's hand were revealed, it would be the duty of the player not to take advantage of the circumstance by all the rules of honour. Therefore, the man in this particular problem must consider that he has altogether failed in his quest. He can truthfully go back to his employer and say, "I have failed to find the person who committed the crime." He has so failed and failed absolutely; that is to say, all the machinery of inquiry he might lawfully employ has yielded no result. The fact that by a pure accident, not in the laws of the game at all, he obtained the information from the confidence of another, does not in the least lessen his obligation to find it out for himself, and his inquiries have led to no result, and he cannot possibly act on any information obtained in the manner stated in the problem.

The maxim "play the game" applies to this as it does to every other circumstance in life. He is bound to clear his mind absolutely of the knowledge that the offender he is seeking may be the one who has given him his confidence. He is like the lawyer with his client, the priest with his penitent. The priest knows what he knows and he leaves justice to find out what it can. The lawyer knows what he knows, but he must not become the confederate of the detective. The detective would never ask him to do anything of the sort, and similarly the young man's employer, if a man of honour, would refrain in the same way. So much for the absolute certainty that the man in this instance would not give up the woman. His clear duty is to go to his employer, confess his absolute failure to discover the culprit and withdraw from the whole business. The rest, of course, as it affects the mutual relations between the pair must be determined by other circumstances which are not so easy to assume. If the circumstances of the confession involve her character very deeply, he might of course feel that he could not possibly regard her as he had done before. Or if again on the other hand he felt that she had been more sinned against than sinning and that there were circumstances that tended to diminish her share of culpability, if not to get rid of it altogether, why then indignation might be turned to pity and he might feel more attached to her than ever. These considerations, however, go rather beyond the limits of the problem as stated. The one thing to determine is his duty towards his employer and towards the girl. It may be no part of his duty to continue loving her, but it is quite certain that he must not denounce her.

"Jeannie Anderson" has written a very touching letter. It is a great responsibility laid upon teachers, the calling forth of so much devotion from young hearts.

I am sure that "She" knows that Jeannie loves her very much, but it would never do for her to show her knowledge. If "She" is true-hearted she would wish that the love so lavishly bestowed upon her should be directed to fine purposes. She would wish Jeannie to trust and devote her energy to doing yet better work. It is only through strong affection that we become real women, because it is only through strong affection that we can know the meaning of suffering and of joy. "She" is not likely to be disturbed by the thought of Jeannie Anderson having cared for another teacher. It is enough for her that she has Jeannie's love, but love is a poor thing if it does not chasten her soul and make it strong to endure.